

from the New York Times bestselling author of Courtney Crumrin

WITCH FOR HIRE



TED NAIFEH









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FOR HIRE



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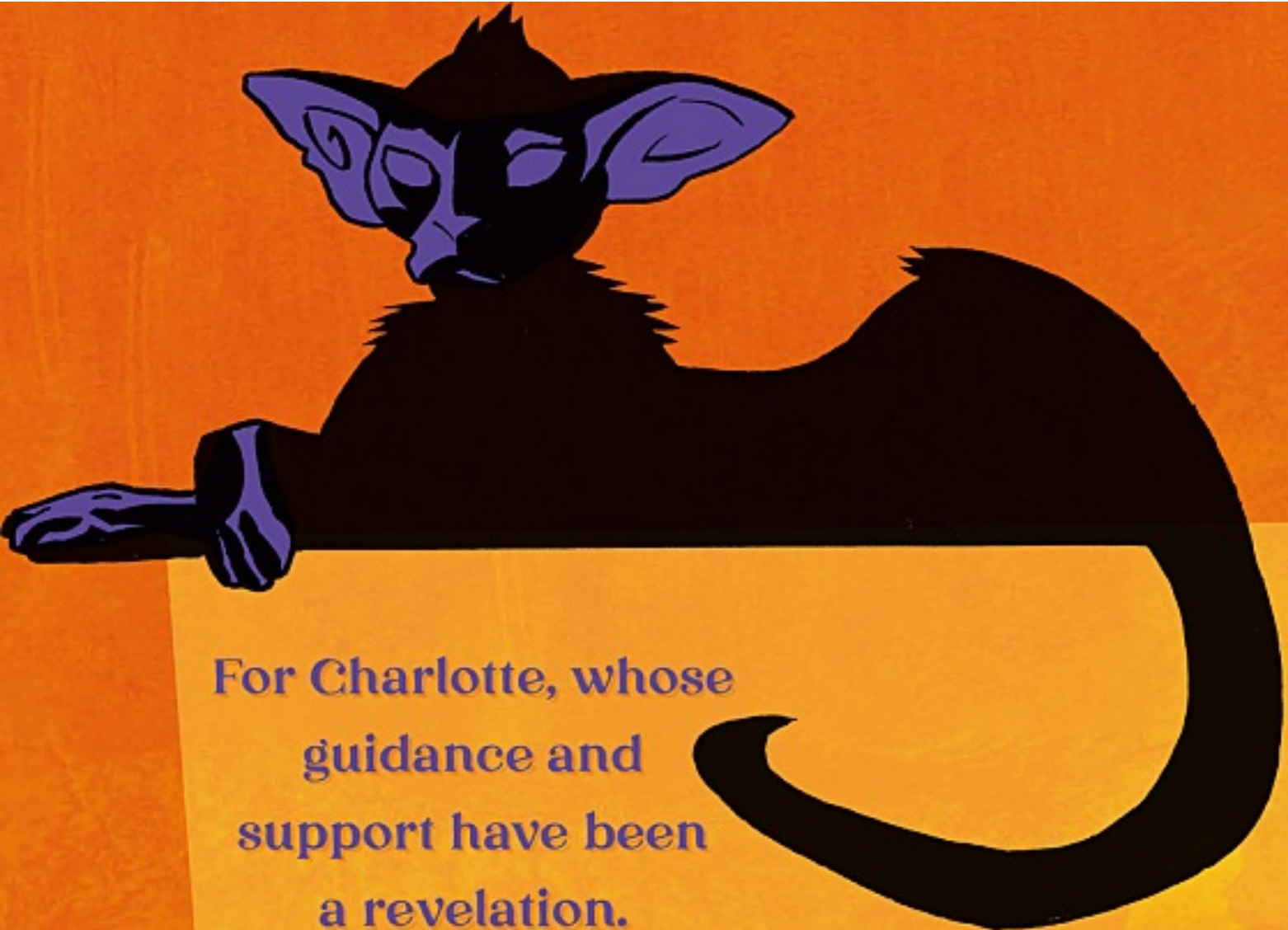
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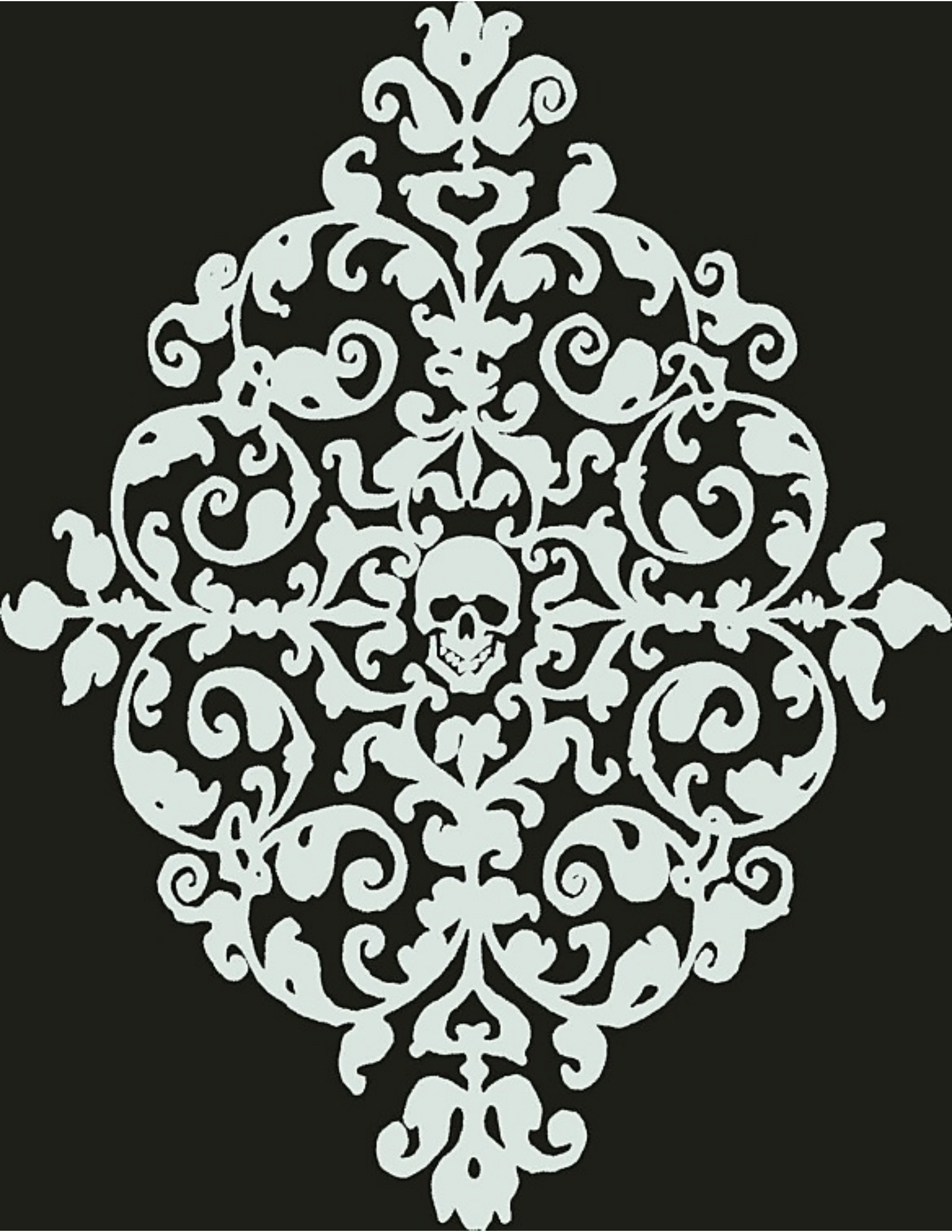
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For Charlotte, whose
guidance and
support have been
a revelation.



< shy__shelbi

3k post

2,3 mil followers

5 following

Do you dream of changing your life? Me too. I tried it all: fitness, fashion, universal one-ness through yoga and healthy bowels . . . but I realized I needed to [#transform](#) who I was on the inside. If you want to do what I did, leave weakness behind and become your best self, I can help. Message me up now! I respond to EVERYONE.

Follow

Message

Email



5-step
program

rules

prizes &
penalties

more



Check out my before-and-after photos! It's easier than you think to shed your worries, fears, regrets, and become stronger than you ever dreamed. Meet people just like you who [#selfactualized](#) through the shy__shelbi 5-step program.







the shy_shelbi program

Step 1: I'm not here to make friends

The world will constantly tell you how much you need people's approval. Don't listen. You don't want to need them, you want them to need you. So step 1 is learning to dominate your social group . . . more

- Faye's Journal, September 1st -
It turns out there's a sort of freedom
in having nothing left to lose.



It's kinda like wading
into icy water...

SO MACKENZIE DID
FOUR PHOTOSHOOTS OVER THE
SUMMER. GUESS HER SO-CALLED
MODELING CAREER IS REAL
AFTER ALL.

YEAH, I HEARD.
KNOW WHAT SHE'S
SAYING ABOUT IT?

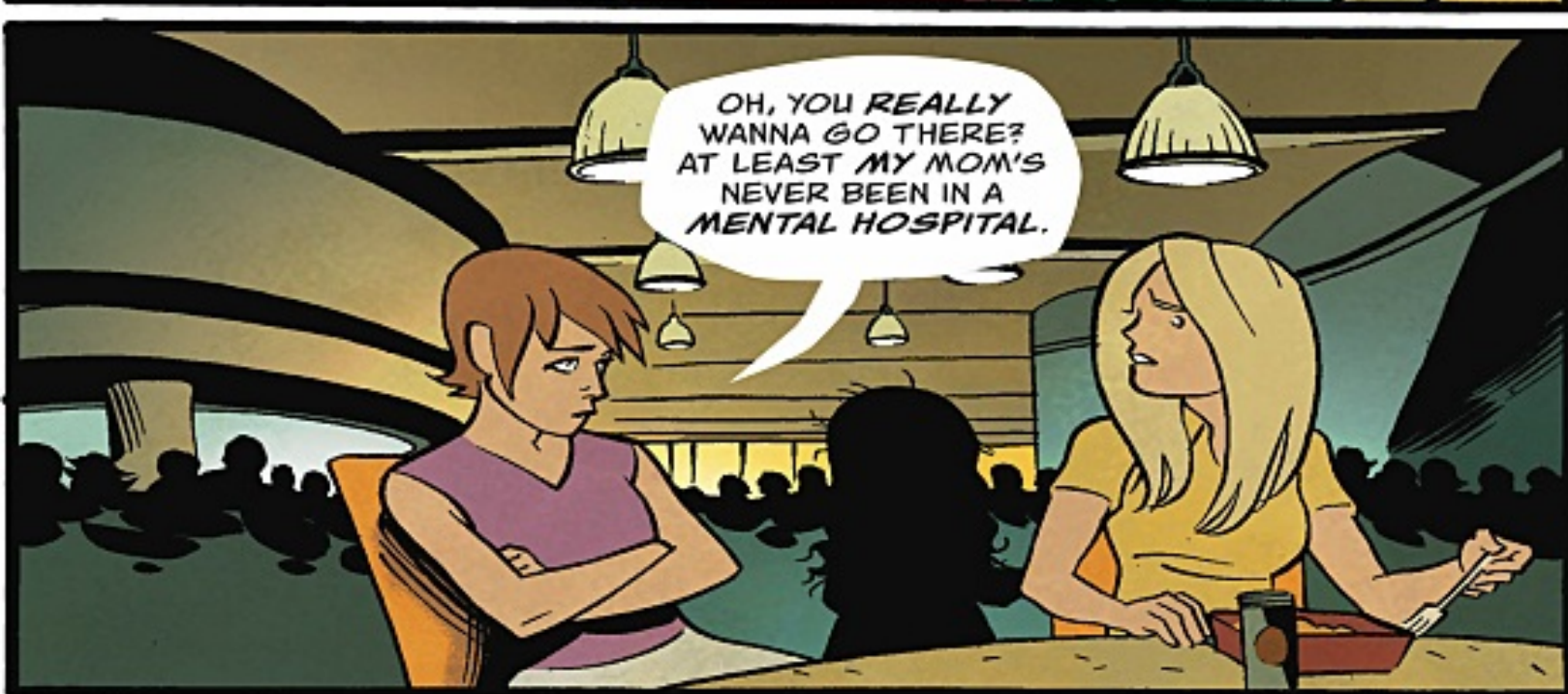
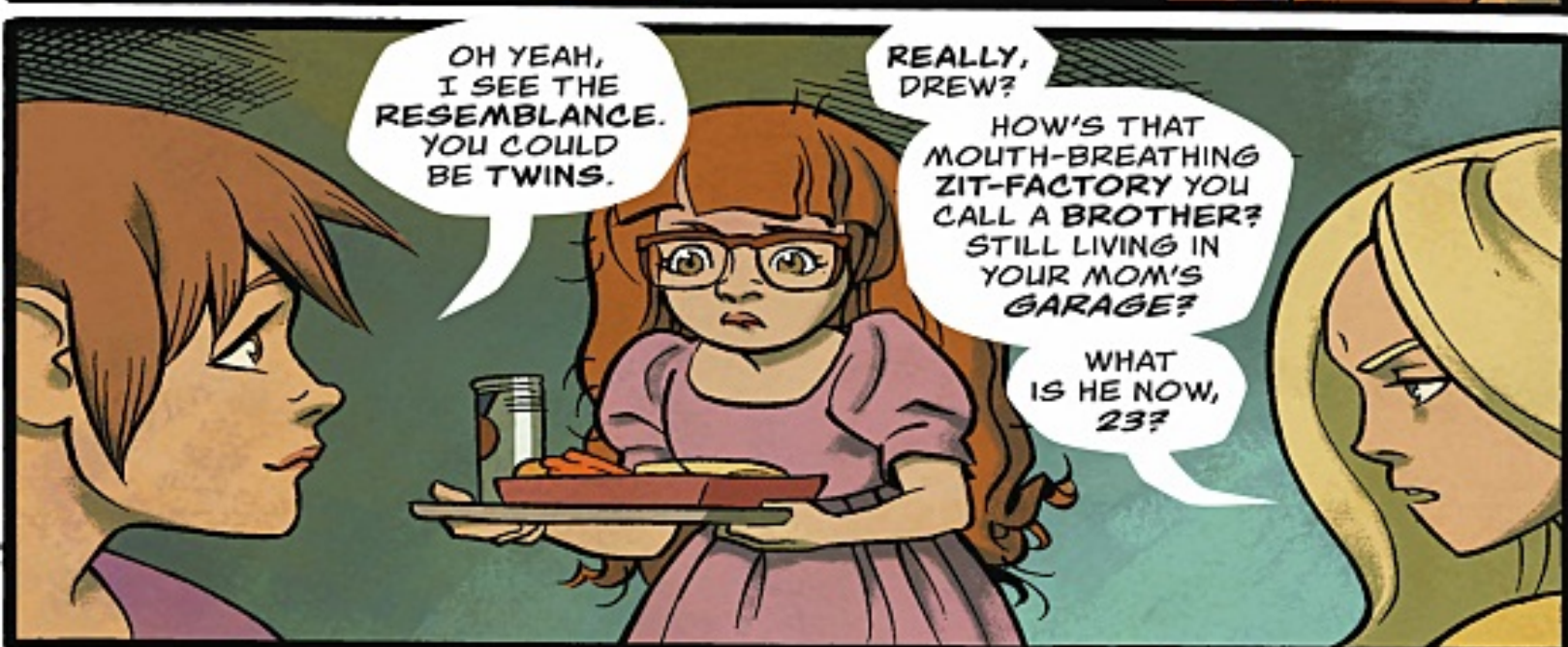
Every inch you sink
is agony. Knowing
there's more to come
makes it worse.

"IT'S NO
BIG DEAL."

ugh!

SHE'S
LITERALLY THE
WORST.

UMMM, HEY,
BRYCE? CAN
I, uh...








WELL, AT
LEAST YOU KNOW
WHERE YOU
STAND.

DON'T
WORRY,
SIS.

YOU'LL FIT
RIGHT IN.

It's only when
you just dive in,
get it over with,
you realize, after
the horrible
shock...




... it's not so
bad. You can
live with this.

uh...
IS THIS
SEAT, uh...







AND JÚLIO,
THAT'S PROBABLY
ENOUGH SHAKESPEARE
FOR ONE DAY.

HOW DARE YOU?!
THERE'S NO SUCH
THING AS ENOUGH
SHAKESPEARE.




THIS IS
AMAZING!



ORANGE
ZEST. THE MAGIC
INGREDIENT.

SEE?
THE LOSER
TABLE HAS
ITS PERKS.



LEMME GUESS.
SOMEONE TOLD YOU
IF YOU ENDED UP
HERE YOU'D BE A
LOSER FOR LIFE.

MY BIG SISTER,
BRYCE. SHE SAYS
IT'S CURSED.

EXCEPT
ANTOINE LEVIN
USED TO SIT HERE.
THEN, HE GREW TWO FEET
OVERNIGHT. NOW HE'S THE
STAR PLAYER ON THE
VARSITY TEAM.

TOINE?
YOU MEAN
THE GUY DATING
MACKENZIE
MERCADO?

I HEARD SHE'S
ALREADY MODELING
FOR MAGAZINES.

OH YEAH,
MACKENZIE.

HER FIRST
DAY? HEADGEAR,
SWOLLEN GUMS,
FRIZZY HAIR, THE
WORKS. STRAIGHT
TO THE LOSER
TABLE.

WHERE
DO YOU THINK
SHE AND TOINE
MET?

RIGHT
WHERE YOU'RE
SITTING.

NO
WAY!

RAFFI IS ONLY STUCK
HERE TILL EVERYONE FIGURES
OUT HE LIVES IN A MANSION WITH
AN OLYMPIC SWIMMING POOL.
THEN HE'S DOOMED.

AND JIYOUNG
IS GOING TO
A GIFTED SCHOOL
WITH ACTUAL
WHEELCHAIR
ACCESSIBILITY.

YOU'RE
ABOUT THE ONLY
THING I'LL MISS ABOUT
THIS DUMP, FAYE.



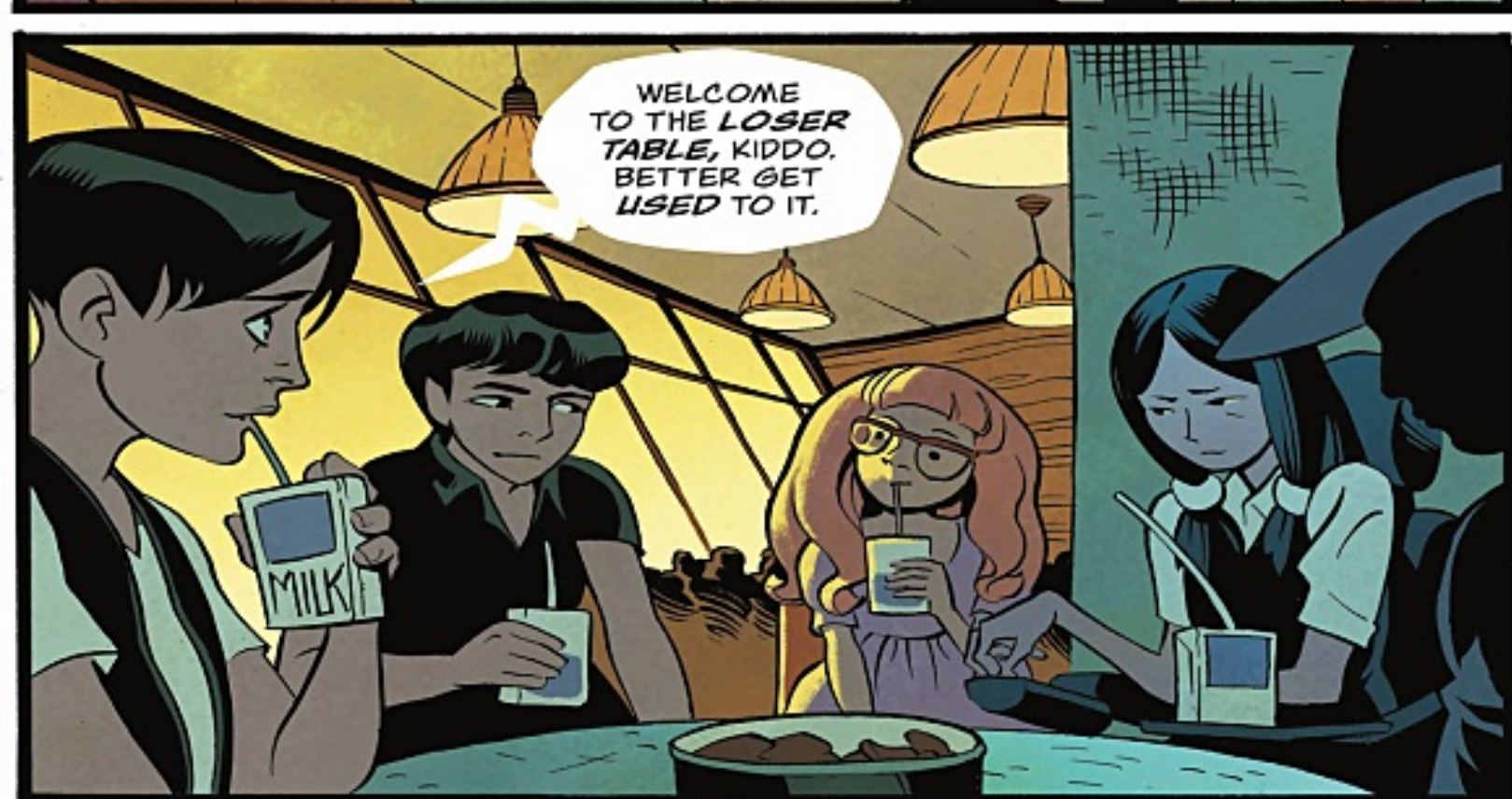
AND OBVIOUSLY,
JÚLIO WILL BE IN THE
DRAMA CLUB BY
NEXT WEEK.

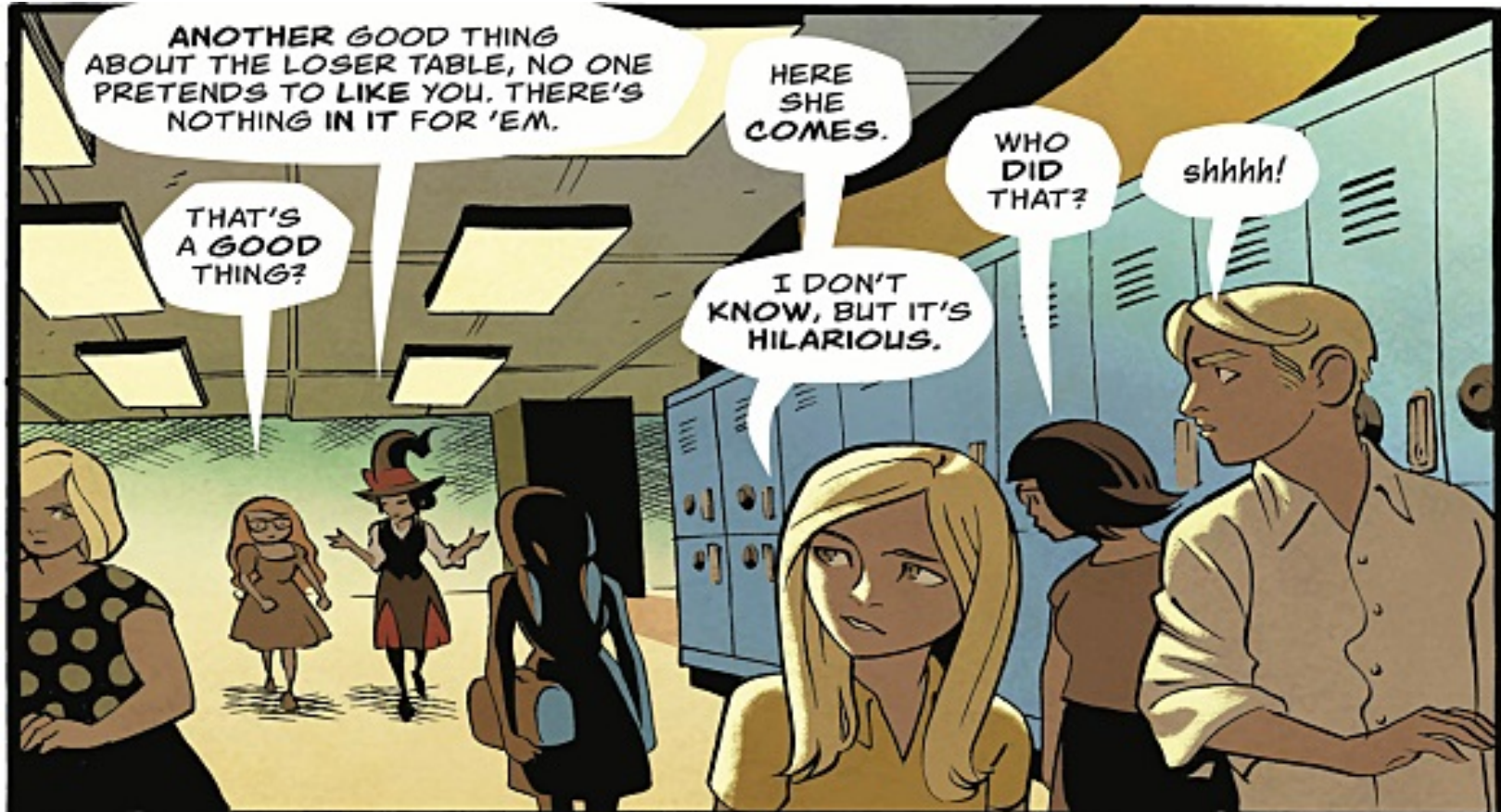
HAH!!!

KURT LASKY
AND THOSE DOLTS
STAGING RENT LIKE
IT'S STILL A THING?

I
THINK
NOT!







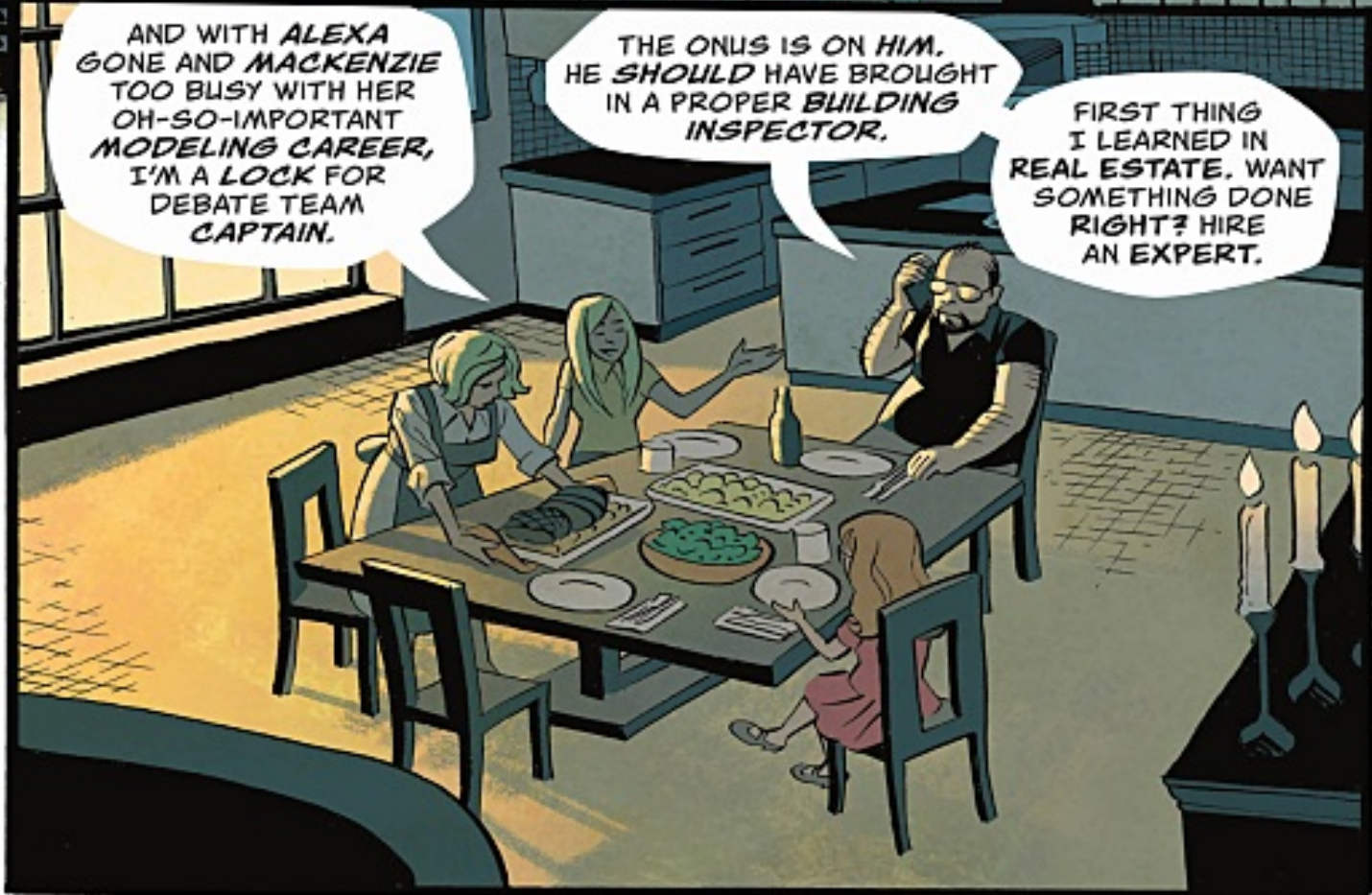


OH BOO-HOO!
HIS HOUSE GOT BURIED
IN A **LANDSLIDE**. HOW IS
THIS **MY** FAULT?

AND WITH **ALEXA**
GONE AND **MACKENZIE**
TOO BUSY WITH HER
OH-SO-IMPORTANT
MODELING CAREER,
I'M A **LOCK** FOR
DEBATE TEAM
CAPTAIN.

THE ONUS IS ON HIM.
HE **SHOULD** HAVE BROUGHT
IN A PROPER **BUILDING**
INSPECTOR.

FIRST THING
I LEARNED IN
REAL ESTATE. WANT
SOMETHING DONE
RIGHT? HIRE
AN EXPERT.




DAD!
DEBATE TEAM
CAPTAIN!

PMMM.

COOL, RIGHT?
AND **AIDEN OLRICH**
IS GONNA ASK ME OUT.
YOU REMEMBER, HIS
DAD IS THE CEO OF-

TELL
HIM TO **GET**
LOST.

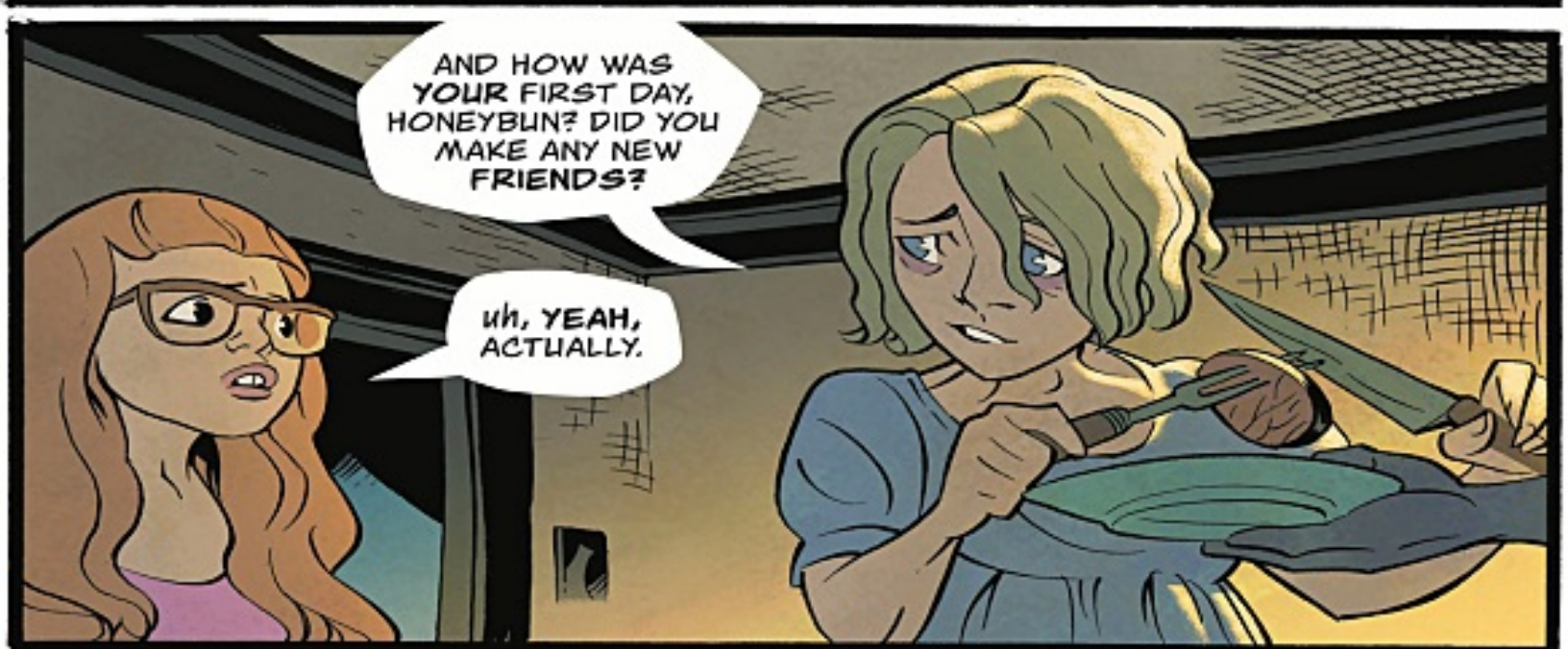




T- TELL HIM-?

IF HE THINKS HE CAN PROVE LIABILITY, HE CAN TRY SUING US AND SEE WHERE IT GETS HIM.

BUT HE MAY WANT TO SPRING FOR AN ACTUAL LAWYER.



AND HOW WAS YOUR FIRST DAY, HONEYBUN? DID YOU MAKE ANY NEW FRIENDS?

uh, YEAH, ACTUALLY.

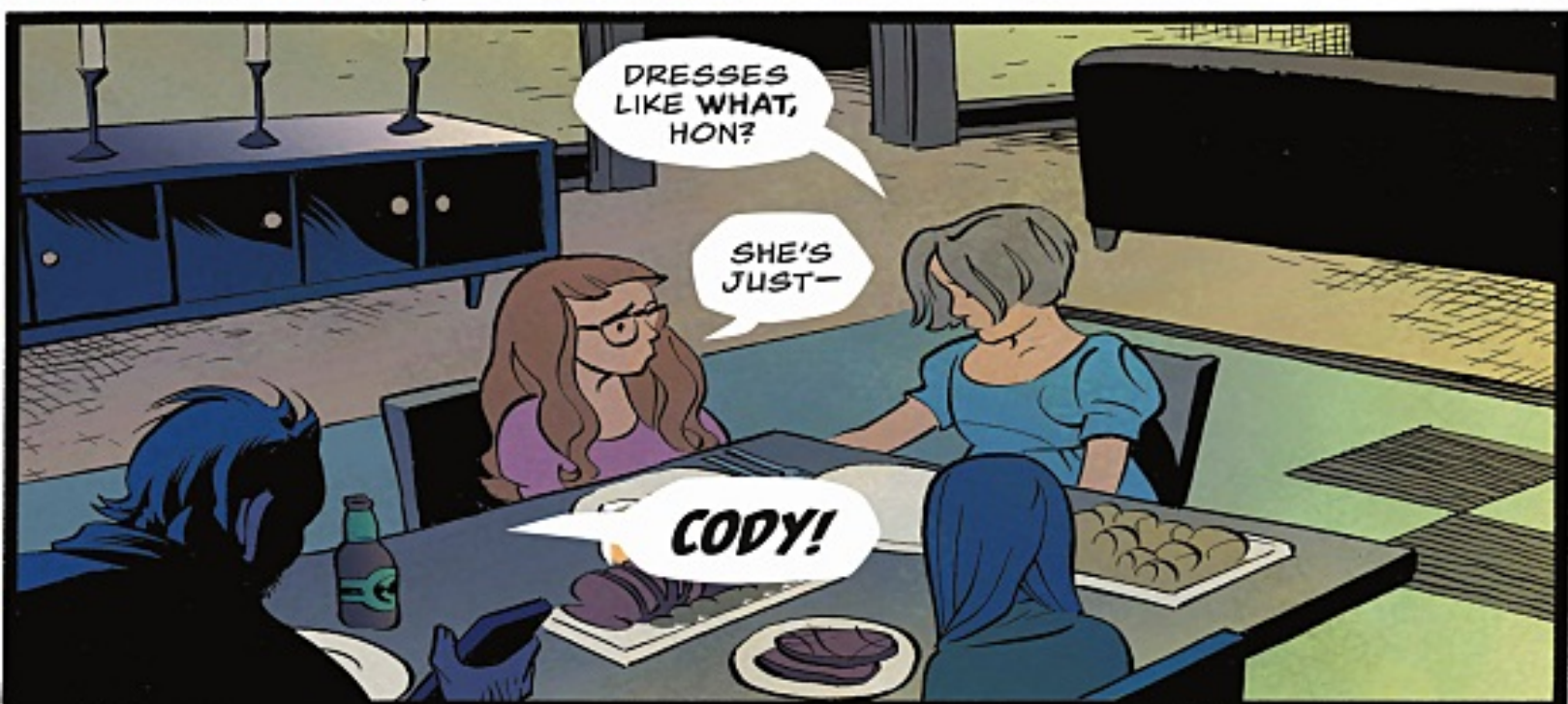
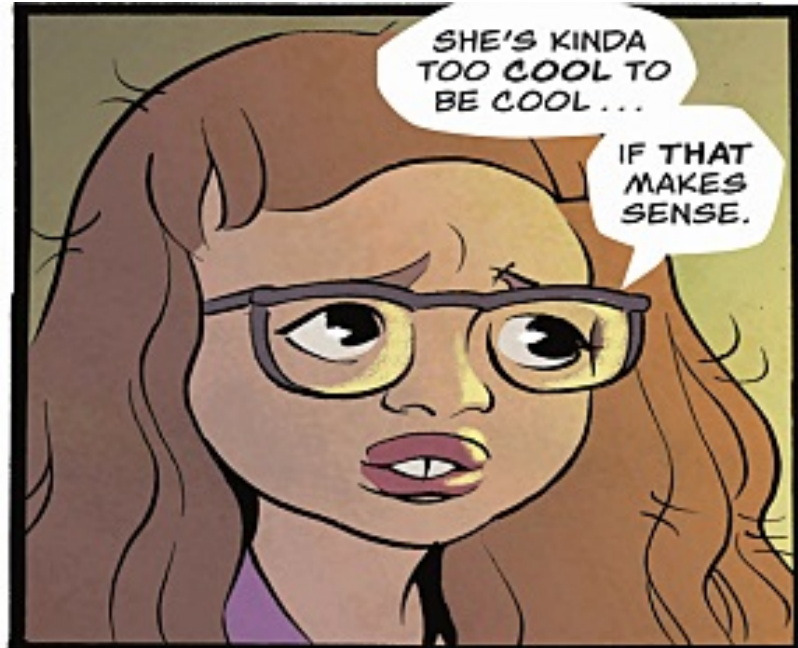


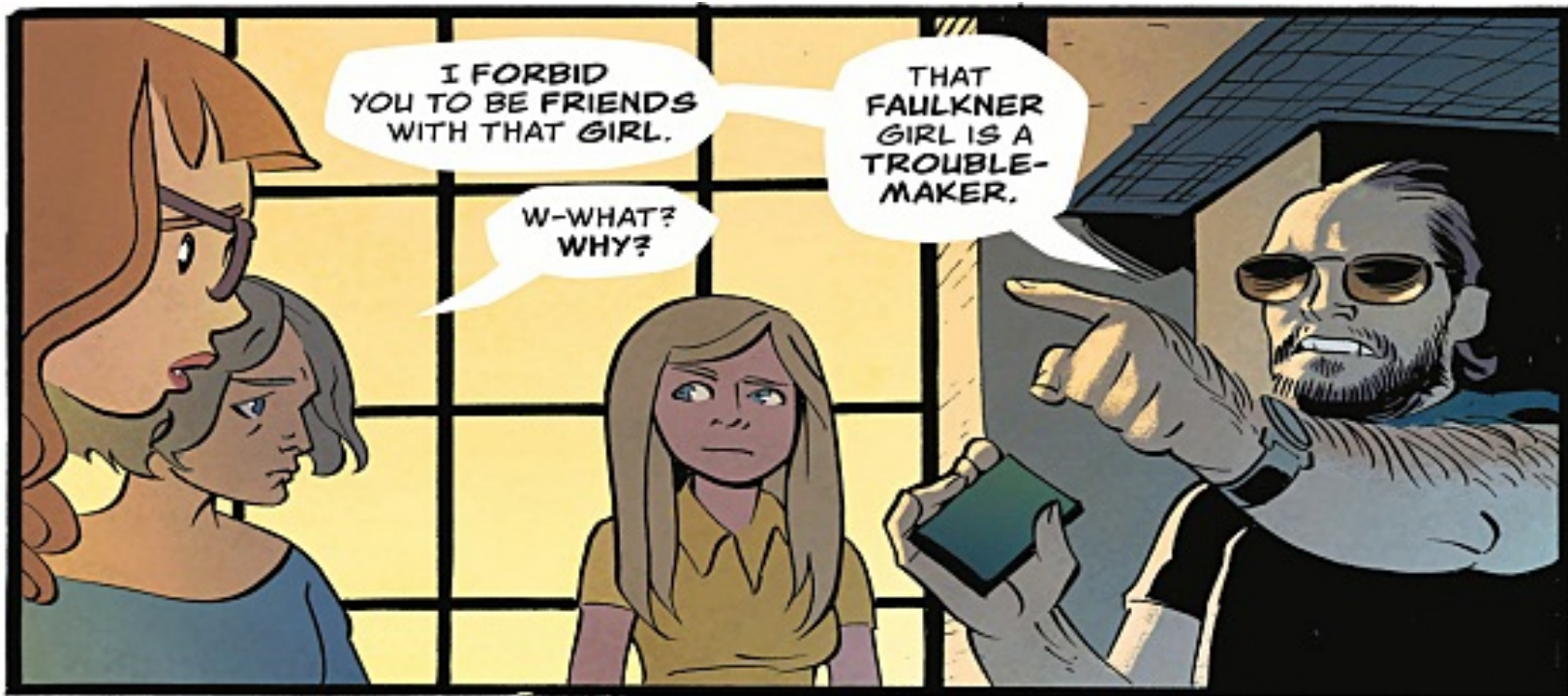
I MEAN, THEY'RE NOT THE COOLEST KIDS IN SCHOOL, BUT THEY'RE, YA KNOW, NICE ...

WELL, I THINK COOL IS A LITTLE OVERRATED ANYWAY.

heh, YEAH. THERE'S THIS ONE GIRL, THOUGH ...

A COOL GIRL?

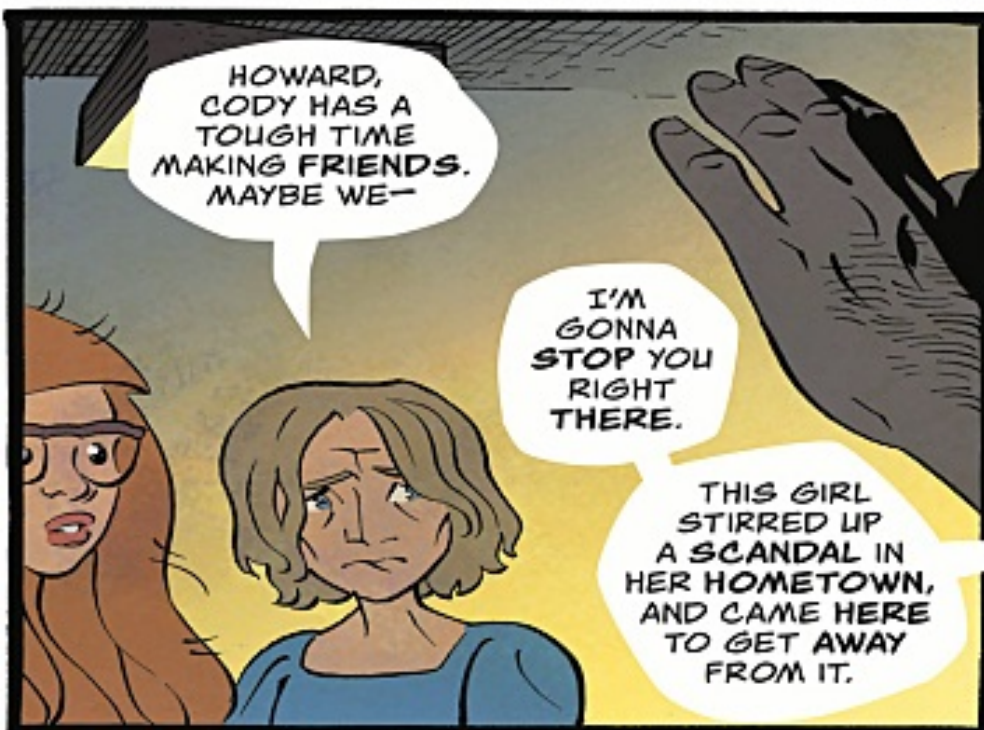




I FORBID
YOU TO BE FRIENDS
WITH THAT GIRL.

THAT
FAULKNER
GIRL IS A
TROUBLE-
MAKER.

W-WHAT?
WHY?



HOWARD,
CODY HAS A
TOUGH TIME
MAKING FRIENDS.
MAYBE WE—

I'M
GONNA
STOP YOU
RIGHT
THERE.

THIS GIRL
STIRRED UP
A SCANDAL IN
HER HOMETOWN,
AND CAME HERE
TO GET AWAY
FROM IT.



IT WAS ALL OVER THE
NEWS, REMEMBER?
TWO YEARS AGO.

I ...
MAYBE?



YOUR ACTIONS
REFLECT ON THIS
FAMILY, YOUNG
LADY.

I CAN'T HAVE
MY DAUGHTER
HANGING AROUND
WITH A JUVENILE
DELINQUENT.

IT LOOKS BAD.
ESPECIALLY AFTER
YOUR MOTHER'S ...
TROUBLES.



YES, AS A MATTER
OF FACT, I DO WEAR
MY HAT EVERY DAY.



WHAT'S YOUR
POINT?

JUST
THAT IF
YOU DRESSED,
YOU KNOW,
NORMALLY ...



BUT I
DON'T.

YEAH,
BUT ...

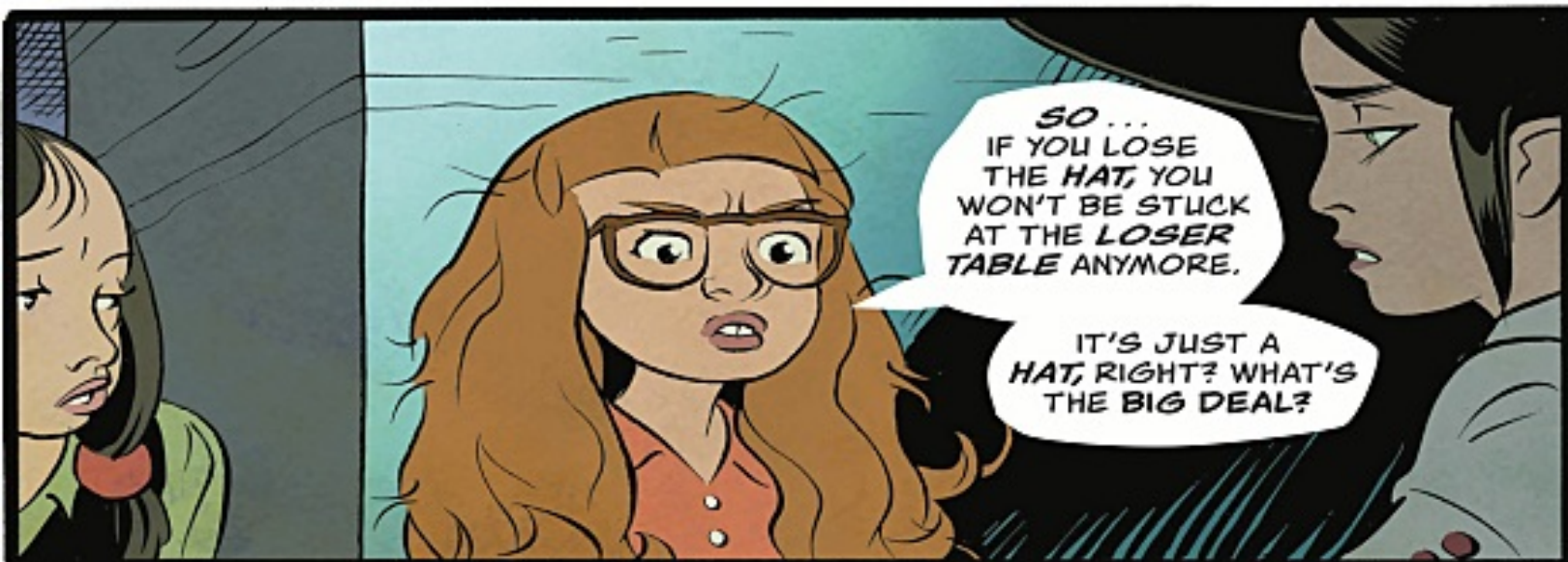


I'M JUST
SAYING YOU'RE
COOL, OKAY?

GOSH,
THANKS.

AND THE
ONLY REASON
YOU'RE STILL
STUCK HERE
AFTER TWO
YEARS ...





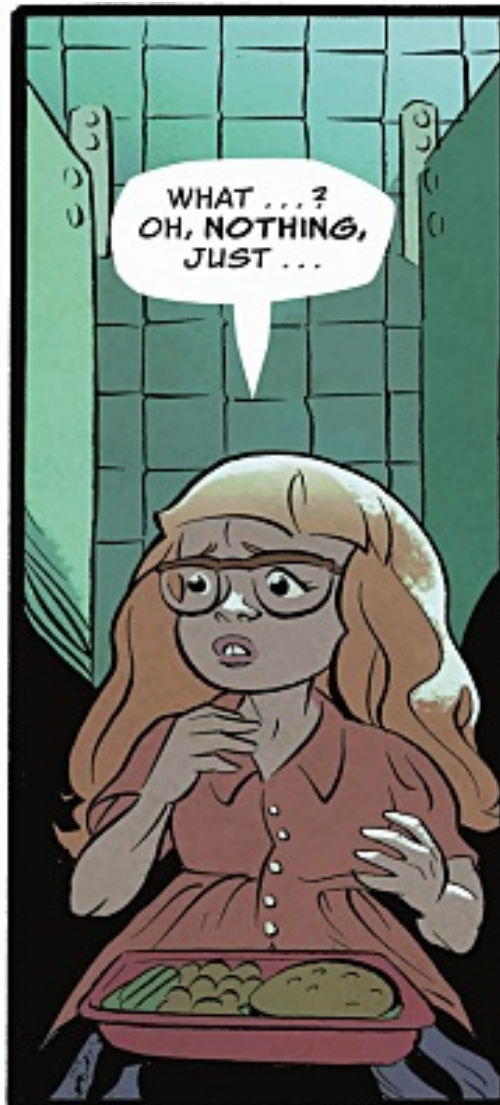






ARE YOU
OKAY IN THERE?
SOMETHING
WRONG?

SOB

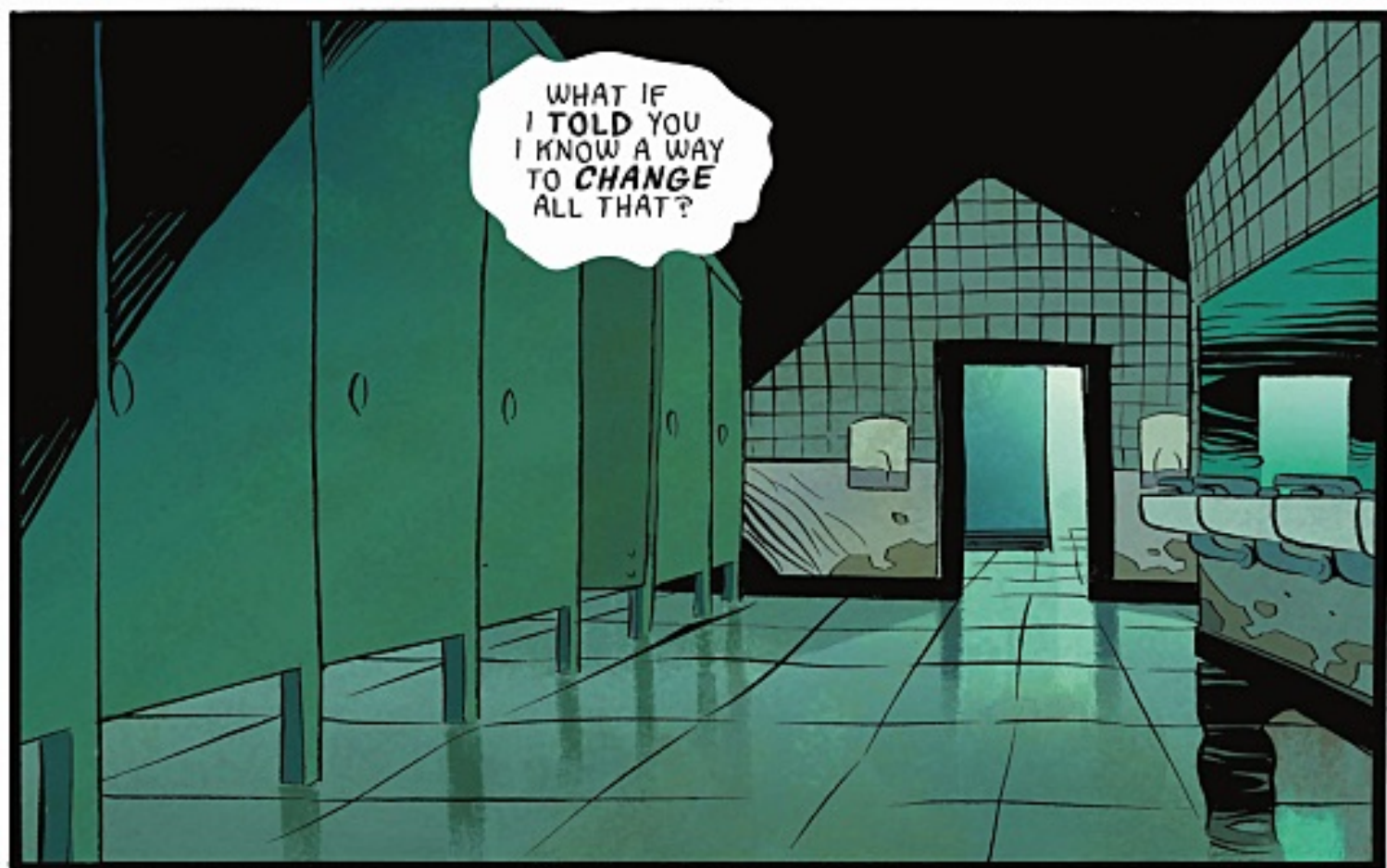


WHAT...?
OH, NOTHING,
JUST...



EVERYONE
HATES ME, AND
I'VE GOT NO
FRIENDS.

I SEE.



WHAT IF
I TOLD YOU
I KNOW A WAY
TO **CHANGE**
ALL THAT?





shy_shelbi

36 post 2.2 mil followers 5 following

Do you dream of changing your life? Me too. I tried it a fashion, universal one-size through yoga and healthy I but I realized I needed to transform who I was on the you want to do what I did. It's leave your weakness behind become a your best self. I can help. Did me up now I re EVERYONE.

Follow

Message

Email

3-step program

rules

price \$ per hour

more



insta-chat

Shy_Shelbi

SS The rules are so simple. Any idiot could follow them. Maybe you don't have what it takes.

This is your last chance. Don't fail again.

You'll need 6 cans of spray paint. Go to the south parking lot. No one will be there. Await my instructions.



the shy_shelbi program

Step 2: Sounds like a "you" problem

People often think that because they have an issue, it's everyone's issue. Don't let them weigh you down with their emotional baggage. Step 2, detachment . . . [more](#)

- Faye's Journal, September 20th -

The first three weeks of school are the hardest. When the Loser Table is still crowded, it starts to feel almost like a little family.



YOU REALLY
THINK FAULKNER DID
THIS? I KNOW SHE'S
UNSTABLE, BUT ...

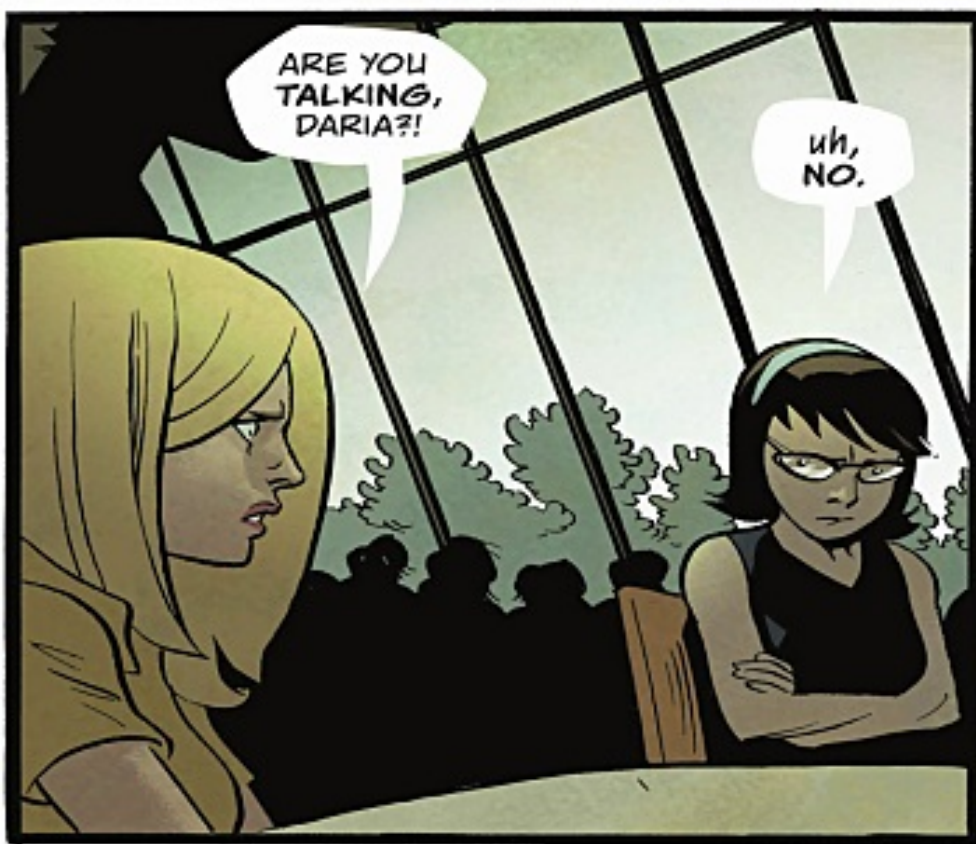
IT'S GOTTA
BE HER. SHE'S ANGRY
ABOUT HER LOCKER.
THOUGHT SHE'D
TAKE IT OUT ON
EVERYONE.

I THOUGHT
YOU SAID SHE DID
THAT HERSELF FOR
ATTENTION.



ARE YOU
TALKING,
DARIA?!

uh,
NO.



STUFF LIKE
THIS IS ALWAYS
THE CREEPY LITTLE
OUTSIDER TRYING
TO GET EVEN.
TRUST ME.





ONE MORE WEEK, JIYOUNG. STAY STRONG.

YOU TOO, FAYE.

One by one, they all move on, saying we'll stay friends, never really meaning it.



HEY, FAYE?

It's fine, though. I've learned not to get attached. Being alone is one thing I know how to handle.



oh, CODY. WHAT DO YOU WANT?

uh...

I, uh...

MY BIG SISTER THINKS YOU DID THE... "BUTTS" THING.

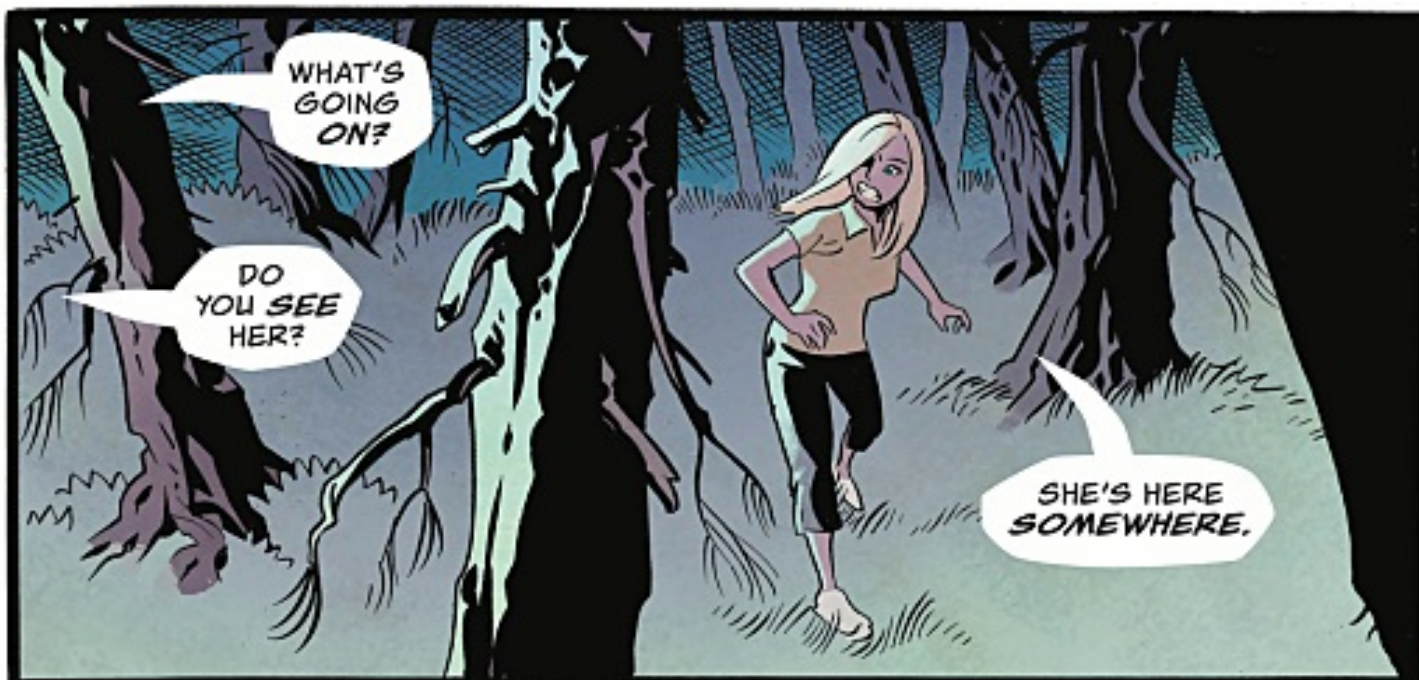


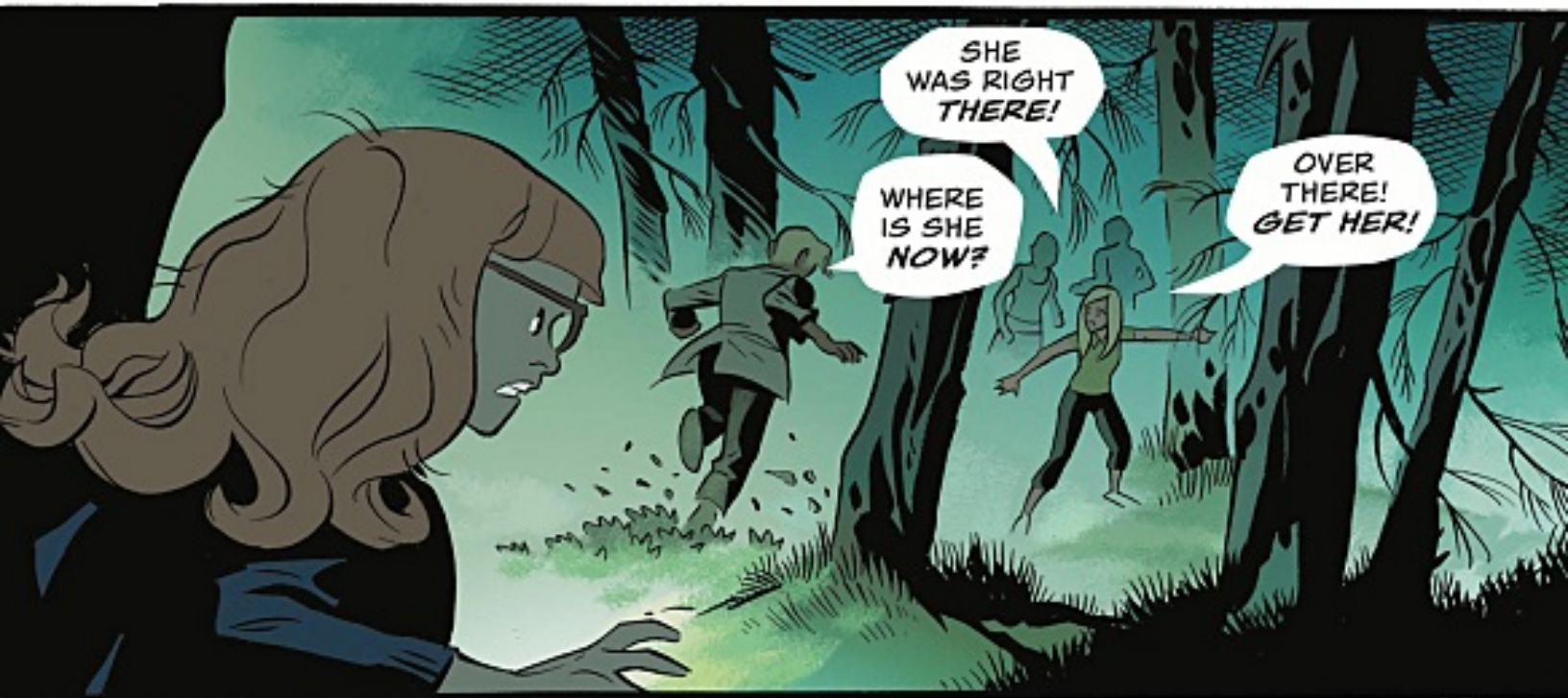
I THINK THEY'RE GONNA...

YEAH. THEY'RE ALREADY HERE.













HANG ON
A MINUTE.
WHAT ARE YOU
SAYING?



SO YOU,
LIKE, HAVE
MAGICAL
POWERS?

WHAT
ELSE CAN
YOU DO?

NONE
OF YOUR
BUSINESS.



ARE YOU
SERIOUS?

YOU CAN'T
JUST DROP A
BOMBSHELL LIKE
THAT AND THEN
WALK AWAY LIKE
IT'S NOTHING.



PRETTY
SURE I'M ABOUT
TO, DEARIE.

WELL, WHAT'S
TO STOP ME
FROM TELLING
EVERYONE?

TELL THEM
I'M A REAL
WITCH WITH
MAGICAL
POWERS?

HOW DO
YOU THINK
THAT'LL PLAY
OUT?

DO YOURSELF A
FAVOR. GO HOME, AND
PRETEND NONE OF THIS
EVER HAPPENED.

FAYE,
IT ...

IT
WAS
ME!

huh?

THE CARS,
THE BUTTS,
IT WAS ME.

WHY?

AND
WHY ARE YOU
TELLING ME?

BECAUSE ...
NO ONE ELSE
WOULD BELIEVE
ME.

WHEN I FIRST
SAW HER PROFILE,
I THOUGHT IT
WAS A JOKE.

BUT
THE MESSAGES
KEPT COMING, SAYING
SOMETHING TERRIBLE
WOULD HAPPEN IF I DIDN'T
FOLLOW THE RULES.


I IGNORED
THEM. TWO DAYS
LATER, MY MOM
HAD HER CAR
ACCIDENT.

SOMEONE
CUT THE ...

ERR ...
WHAT'S-IT?
BRAKE LINE. ON
HER MINIVAN.

SHE WENT OVER
A TEN-FOOT DROP.

SHE'S STILL IN THE ICU.
SHE LOOKS ... HORRIBLE.

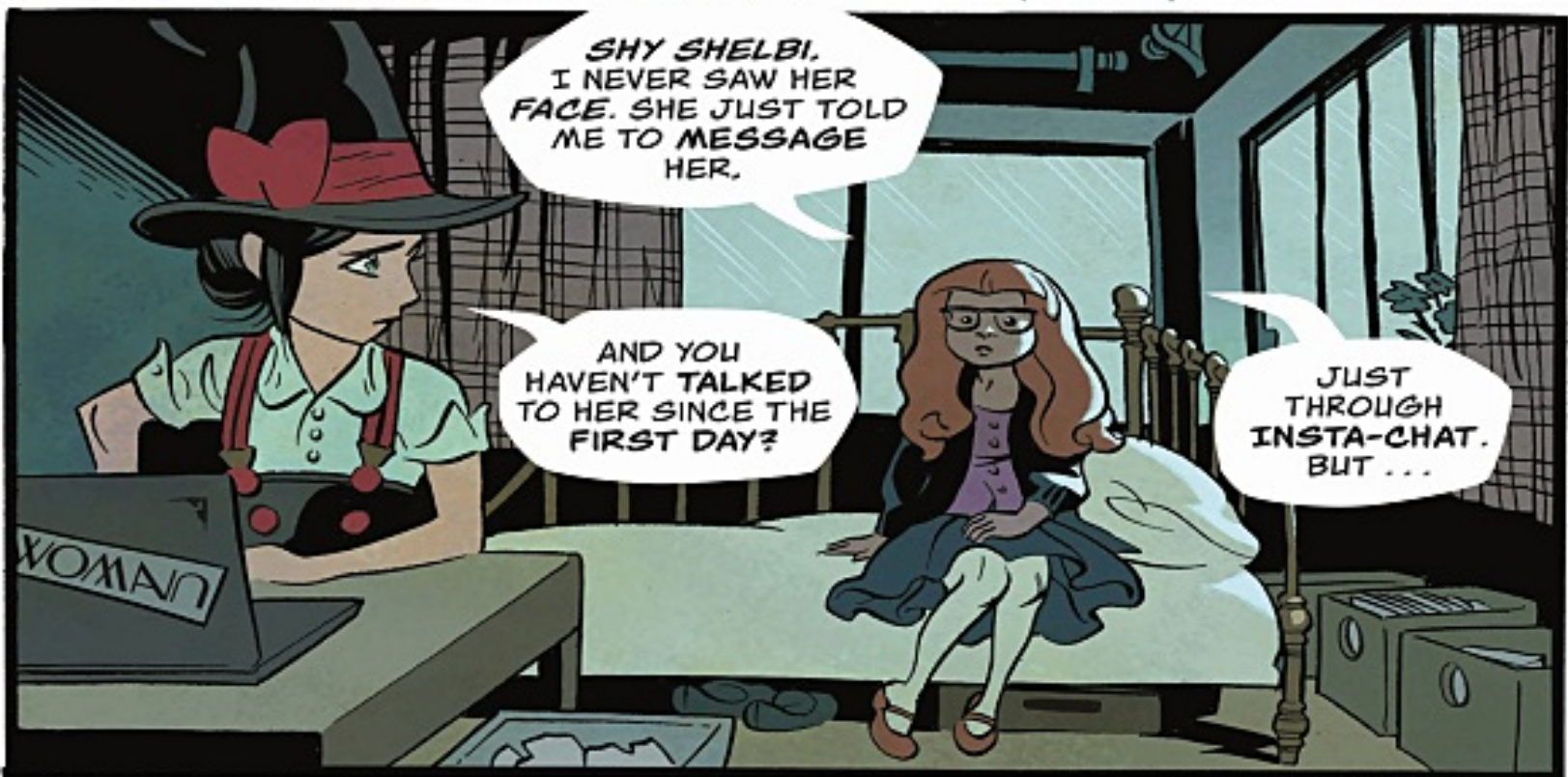


CAN'T BELIEVE
I'M ASKING, BUT
DID YOU TRY
CALLING THE
POLICE.



THEY'RE *STUCK*.
THE VAN WAS LOCKED
IN THE *GARAGE*. NO
ONE COULD HAVE
GOTTEN IN.

huh.
AND THIS
SHABBY SHARON?
WHAT DID SHE
LOOK LIKE?



SHY SHELBI.
I NEVER SAW HER
FACE. SHE JUST TOLD
ME TO MESSAGE
HER.

AND YOU
HAVEN'T TALKED
TO HER SINCE THE
FIRST DAY?

JUST
THROUGH
INSTA-CHAT.
BUT ...



I FEEL
LIKE SHE'S
WATCHING
ME.

ALL THE
TIME.



WHY
ARE YOU
TELLING
ME ALL
THIS?

I THOUGHT
MAYBE, LIKE,
YA KNOW... YOU
COULD USE YOUR
POWERS?



MY
POWERS?

YOUR
WITCHCRAFT,
TO HELP
ME.



MY DAD SAYS IF YOU
CAN'T DO SOMETHING
YOURSELF, HIRE AN EXPERT.
HE'S KIND OF A BIG
DEAL, AND...

UM...
MAYBE HE
COULD PAY
YOU?



SORRY, I'M
NOT THAT KIND
OF WITCH.

WHAT
KIND?

FOR
HIRE.

WELL, err...
DO YOU, LIKE,
KNOW ONE?

A WITCH
FOR HIRE?

ANYONE
WHO COULD
HELP ME!

>sigh<

I DID ONCE.
THE WITCH WHO
TAUGHT ME
EVERYTHING
I KNOW.

OL' LADY
LEDoux, THEY
CALLED HER.

SHE ALWAYS
HELPED. IF THERE WAS
A CURSE TO BREAK, A
HAUNTING TO SORT OUT.
EVEN JUST WHEN SOME
JERK WAS BEATING UP
HIS KIDS.

SHE WASN'T
AFRAID OF ANYTHING
OR ANYONE. NOT
MONSTERS, HUMAN
OR OTHERWISE.

NOT
PARENTS'
GROUPS, OR
ANGRY MOBS,
OR CITY HALL.
NOBODY.

I'M SURE YOU
CAN GUESS HOW
THAT WORKED
OUT.

I GUESS
SHE WASN'T
TOO POPULAR.



YEAH, YOU
COULD SAY THAT.
EVENTUALLY,
SOMEONE KILLED
HER.




OH MY
GOD! DID
THEY CATCH
WHOEVER
DID IT?



"THEY"?
WHO WOULD
"THEY" CATCH?
THEMSELVES?



THEY DON'T EVEN
PRETEND TO DO THAT ANYMORE.
THERE WAS AN "**INQUIRY**," BUT IT
WAS A **JOKE**. THE GUY BASICALLY
JUST WALKED AWAY.



AND ALL THE
PEOPLE SHE **STOOD**
UP FOR AND HELPED
OVER THE YEARS?

NOT A
SINGLE ONE
CAME FORWARD
TO DEFEND
HER NAME.

ONLY
ME.




AND JUST
LIKE THAT, I LOST
ALL MY FRIENDS.



SO YOU'LL
UNDERSTAND IF I
DON'T STICK MY NOSE
IN OTHER PEOPLE'S
BUSINESS.

THE LAST
LESSON I
LEARNED FROM
MY TEACHER?

IT'S NOT
WORTH IT.



SO THAT'S IT? AWFUL THINGS HAPPEN
TO INNOCENT PEOPLE, AND THERE'S
NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT? YOU
HURT OTHERS OR YOU GET HURT?



THAT'S JUST HOW THE
WORLD WORKS, DEARIE.
BETTER GET USED TO IT.



NOT EXACTLY.
CURSE CREATURES
EXIST SOMEWHERE
BETWEEN THE REAL
WORLD AND THE REALM
OF IDEAS, I GUESS
YOU COULD SAY.

WHAT DOES
THAT MEAN? DOES
IT EXIST OR
DOESN'T IT?

EXACTLY.

ARE YOU
MAKING FUN
OF ME?

THINGS
AIN'T ALWAYS
ONE THING OR
THE OTHER.
THEY CAN BE IN
BETWEEN.

CURSES
CAN BE LIKE
THAT, NEITHER
REAL NOR UNREAL.
YOU CAN'T NEVER
PROVE THEY MAKE
THINGS HAPPEN.

BUT YOU
CAN'T DENY
'EM NEITHER,
'CAUSE THINGS
KEEP HAPPENIN'
WHETHER YOU
BELIEVE IT
OR NOT.

REMEMBER
THE MONKEY'S
PAW CURSE?

A MONKEY
PUTS ITS
HAND IN A HOLE
TO GET THE
TREAT INSIDE. BUT
WHEN IT CLOSES
ITS FIST, IT CAN'T
PULL IT OUT.

NOW IT'S
TRAPPED,
'CAUSE IT CAN'T
BRING ITSELF TO
LET GO OF THE
TREAT.

SO, THE
CURSE IS
THREE WISHES
THAT ALWAYS GO
WRONG.

BUT THE VICTIM
CAN'T NEVER ABANDON
THE WISHES, 'CAUSE THEY
CAN'T RESIST HOPING THE
NEXT ONE WILL GIVE 'EM
THEIR HEART'S DESIRE.

THAT WAS THIS
HANDSOME FELLA'S
LITTLE GAME. TILL I
CAME ALONG.

YOU
STOPPED
HIM? HOW?

THAT'S A
LONG STORY
FOR ANOTHER
TIME, DEARIE.
GET THE DOOR,
WILL YOU?

BING
BONG

OH, FAYE.
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE?

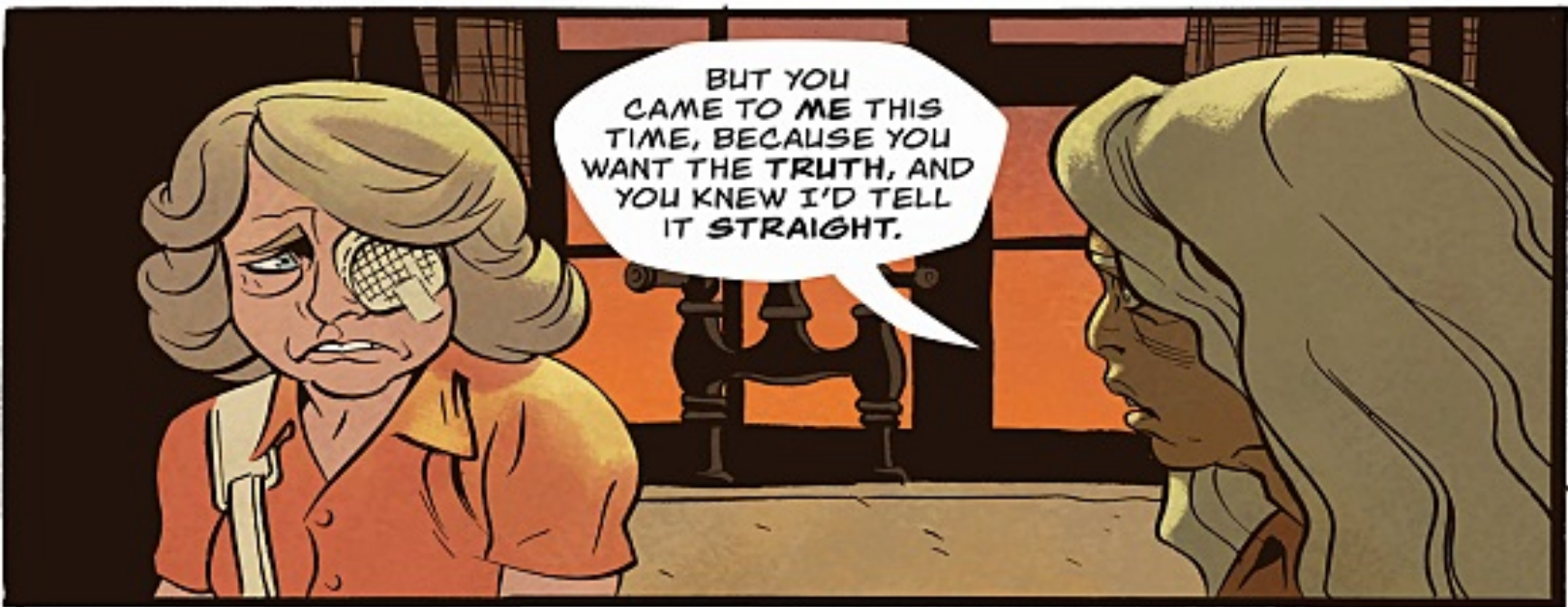
BAKING.
CAN I HELP YOU,
MRS. WILCOX?

FOR HEAVEN'S
SAKE, FAYE. CAN'T
YOU SEE SHE'S
TIRED? YOU BETTER
COME IN, ELLEN.

GINGER CAKE? MADE
IT JUST THIS MORNING.
FAYE LIKES IT WITH ICE CREAM.
THINK I STILL GOT SOME IF
YOU'RE INTERESTED.

I'M SO SORRY
TO BOTHER YOU,
ELVIRA.

ARE YOU?
WELL, THAT'S
A FIRST, I
RECKON. WHAT
CAN I DO FOR
YOU, ELLEN?



HE'S GONNA KILL YOU, ELLEN. SOONER OR LATER, IF YOU KEEP PUTTIN' YOURSELF BETWEEN HIS FISTS AND YOUR KIDS.

YOU'VE GOTTA GET 'EM OUT OF THERE.



HE WON'T LET ME.

HE WILL IF I'M THERE.



I CAN'T LET HIM HURT YOU TOO.


YOU LET ME WORRY ABOUT THAT. HE'S JUST A BULLY, AND I KNOW HOW TO STAND UP TO BULLIES. BEEN DOIN' IT ALL MY LIFE.



I...

I CAN'T DO THIS. I'M NOT BRAVE ENOUGH. I'M NOT LIKE YOU, ELVIRA. I'VE NEVER STOOD UP TO ANYONE.





YOU'D BE SURPRISED. SOMETIMES, YOU FIND MORE STRENGTH INSIDE YOU THAN YOU EVER THOUGHT YOU HAD.

EAT YOUR CAKE. JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME, THERE'S A LITTLE MAGIC IN THE GINGER.



MIGHT JUST GIVE YOU THE COURAGE YOU NEED.

ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF ME?

NOT AT ALL.



I THOUGHT YOU HATED MRS. WILCOX.

SURE DO. SHE'S BEEN TRYING TO RUN ME OUT OF TOWN FOR TWENTY YEARS.

SO WHY ARE YOU HELPING HER?

AIN'T YOU LEARNED NOTHING?

ELLEN NEEDS HELP, AND AIN'T NO ONE ELSE GONNA HELP HER. IF I DON'T NEITHER, I'M AS GOOD AS LETTING HER DIE.



MAYBE *SOME* FOLKS COULD LIVE WITH THAT, BUT NOT *ME*.

BUT YOU SAID IT YOURSELF! MR. WILCOX IS OUT OF CONTROL. HE'LL HURT YOU!



NOT IF I GOT *THIS*.

WHAT IS THAT?

CALL IT A LUCKY CHARM.



ELVIRA?



I'M READY. YOU SURE YOU WANT TO DO THIS?



WOULDN'T MISS IT FOR THE WORLD, DEARIE. LET'S GET THEM KIDS *SAFE*.



FINE!

OKAY,
SHY SHELBI.
LET'S DANCE.





the shy_shelbi program Step 3: Don't @ Me

No one will thank you for living your best life. They'll act like your [#selfactualization](#) is somehow hurting them. Before you take on other people's interpretation of reality, ask yourself, how right could it be if it just makes their life suck? Step 3, defending your reality . . . more

DUDE! SOMEONE
SET THE PLAYGROUND
AT NEWBURY PARK ON
FIRE LAST NIGHT.

HOME COMING DANCE

- Faye's Journal, October 3rd -

Elvira said things like curse creatures exist in "the Ethereal," a space between the real and the unreal.

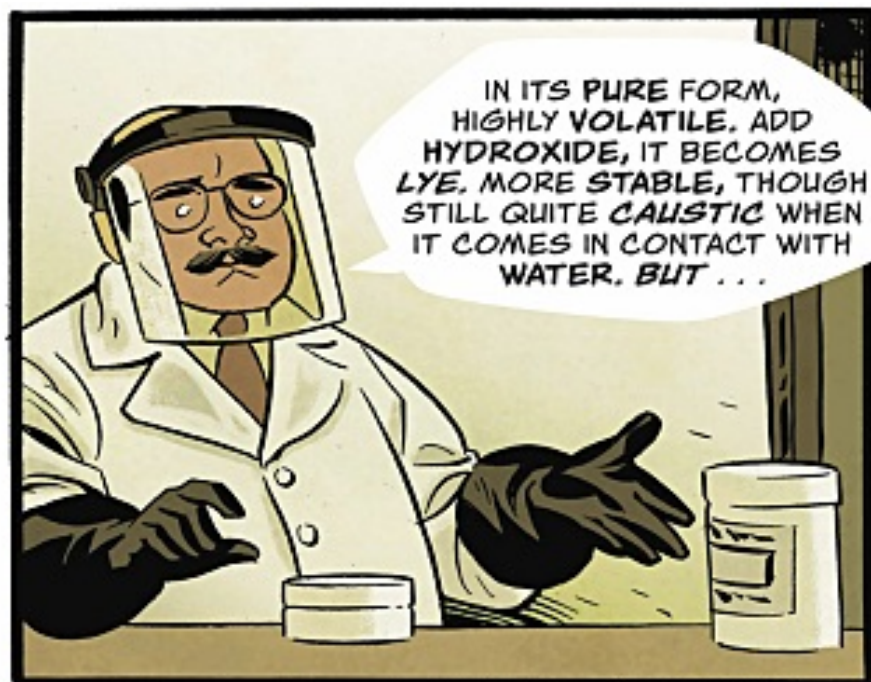
I HEARD. SICK!
HEAR ABOUT THE RAT
POISON THEY FOUND IN
CEREAL BOXES AT THE
GROCERY STORE?

I HEARD IT WAS
CAT FOOD. THAT'S
MESSED UP!

THANKS
FOR JOINING US,
BOYS. AS I WAS
SAYING . . .

SODIUM.

This makes them
hard to fight.



So you start by studying their movements. Their modus operandi.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MR. KAUFMAN?

IS THE SCHOOL GONNA BURN DOWN?

PLEASE EXIT
THE CLASSROOM IN
AN ORDERLY FASHION,
PEOPLE.

BRO!
THAT WAS
SICK!

BEST FIFTH
PERIOD EVER,
YO!

**YEAH
SCIENCE!**



INTERESTING.

MORE
ORDERLY THAN
THAT, MISS
FAULKNER.

Sooner or later,
a pattern will
emerge.



MISS
FAULKNER?

HELLO?



- Faye's Journal, October 5th -
Pranks need an audience.
The bigger the better.

LADIES
AND GENTLEMEN,
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE
THIS YEAR'S HOMECOMING
KING AND QUEEN...

So I had a hunch
Homecoming would
be Shy Shelbi's
ideal hunting ground.

ANTOINE
LEVIN AND
MACKENZIE
MERCADO!

LET'S GIVE
THEM A WARM
DANVILLE HIGH
WELCOME
HOME.

AND NOW,
THE HOMECOMING
KING AND QUEEN
WILL LEAD THE
FIRST...

WHAT
THE-!?

WHOA, IS
THAT... AIDEN
OLRICH?

IT
TOTALLY
IS!

DUDE,
EVERYONE KNOWS
ABOUT KURT LASKY
THERE, BUT-



HA HA!
WHO KNEW
OLRICH WAS
A THEATER
LOVER?

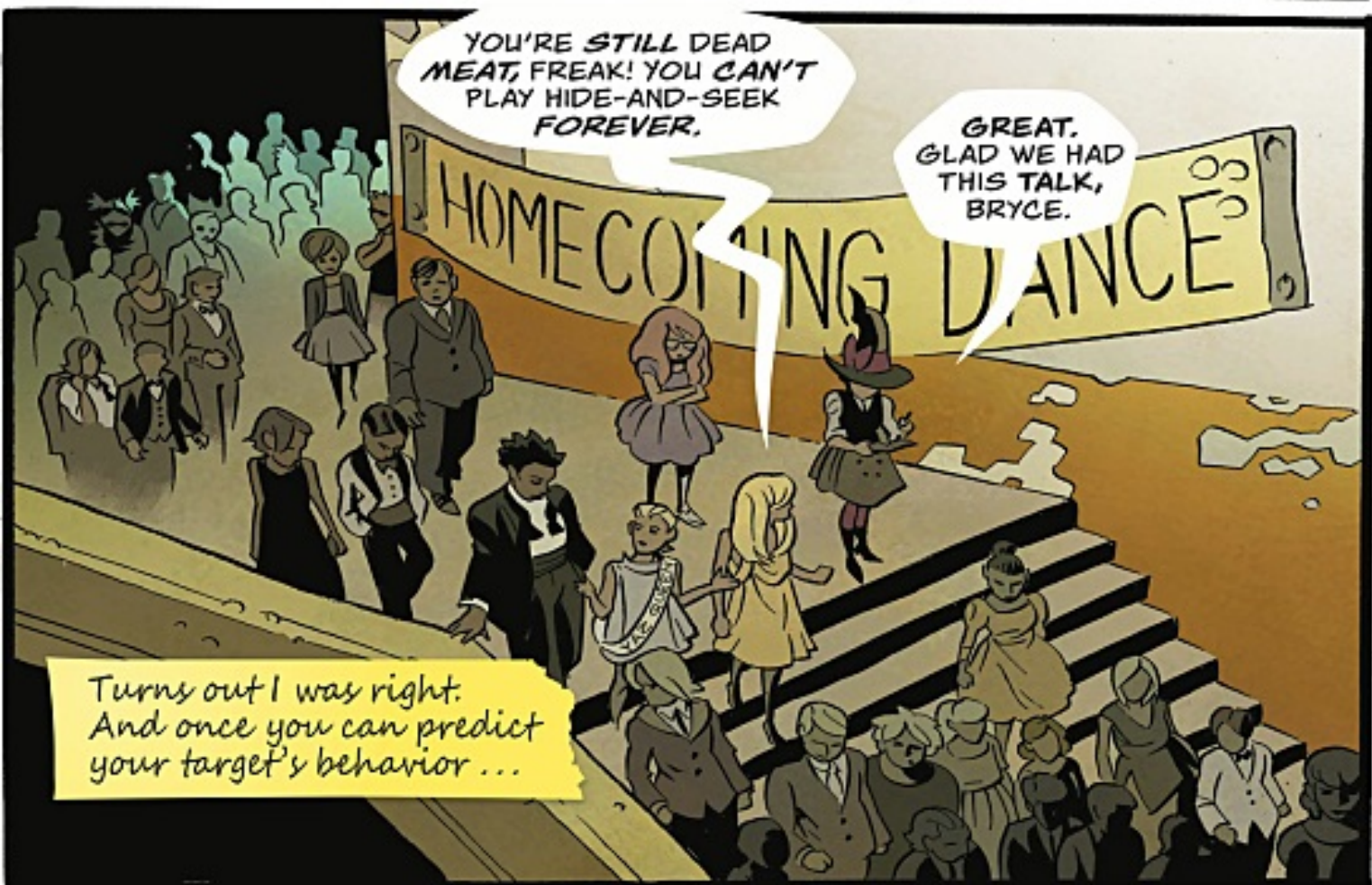
I, uh,
LISTEN, BRYCE,
I WAS JUST
MESSING



OOF!!!

WHAK

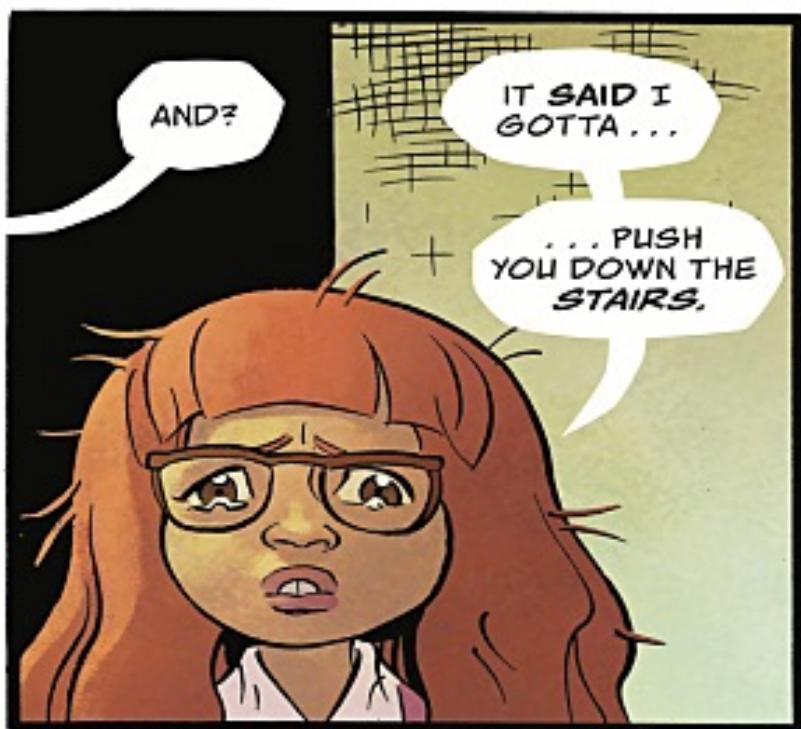
WHOA!



YOU'RE STILL DEAD
MEAT, FREAK! YOU CAN'T
PLAY HIDE-AND-SEEK
FOREVER.

GREAT.
GLAD WE HAD
THIS TALK,
BRYCE.

Turns out I was right.
And once you can predict
your target's behavior...



THAT'S
CRAZY!
WHY?

I WANTED TO SEE
WHAT WOULD HAPPEN
IF I TOLD *SHY SHELBI*
WHERE TO *STICK HER*
LITTLE *GAME*.

AND NOW
I *KNOW*. SHE
SENT YOU.

BUT IF
I *DON'T*...

SO DO
IT.

WHAT? I
CAN'T JUST—

DO IT
NOW!

AAAAHHH!



OH MY
GOD!

WHAT THE
HELL!

YOU PUSHED
HER!!! WHAT ARE
YOU, CRAZY?

I
DIDN'T ...

I DIDN'T
MEAN—

I SAW IT
TOO! SHE
JUST—

HEY,
SHELBI!







WHAT WAS THAT?

IS SHE OKAY DOWN HERE?



CAN YOU *MOVE*?
HOW MANY *FINGERS*
AM I HOLDING UP?

I'M NOT
TAKING *MATH*
ASSIGNMENTS
FROM YOU,
GLENN.



YOU SHOULDN'T
STAND UP. YOU MIGHT
HAVE *AMNESIA*!

THAT'S THE
KID THAT *DID*
IT. SHE TOTALLY
PUSHED YOU—

ARE YOU
OKAY?

OW!
I'M
AWESOME.



I GOT THIS
SHELBI CHARACTER
RIGHT WHERE I
WANT HER.



SOMEONE DID
WHAT!? THAT'S
NOT A PRANK, THAT'S
A HATE CRIME!



WE'RE GOING
TO SPEAK TO
PRINCIPAL ATLEY
RIGHT NOW!

CAN WE JUST
GO HOME
PLEASE? I WANT
TO GO HOME!

ARE YOU
SURE YOU'RE
OKAY?



YEAH. I HAVE
A MAGIC WARD TO
PROTECT ME FROM
STUFF LIKE THAT.

SEE?

BUT ...
YOUR ARM!

THIS? IT'S
A BIT LIKE A
PSYCHIC WOUND.
GUESS MY WARD
DOESN'T WORK
FOR THAT.

THAT'S THE
RISK OF CROSSING
BACK AND FORTH,
ESPECIALLY WITHOUT
A CIRCLE OF
PROTECTION.

YOU CAN
TAKE STUFF
WITH YOU.

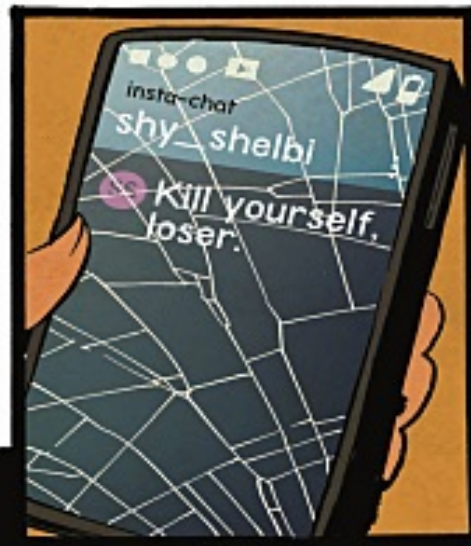
IT
LOOKS
PRETTY
PHYSICAL
TO ME.

LIKE MOST
CURSE CREATURES,
SHY SHELBI ONLY EXISTS
IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.

SHE
DOESN'T HURT
PEOPLE PHYSICALLY,
EXCEPT THROUGH
OTHERS, LIKE
YOU.







Druids and shamans thought they were a sign of a society falling out of harmony with the natural world.



Ancient superstition reckoned them the vengeful will of the unquiet dead.



GREAT.

Ancient superstition reckoned them the vengeful will of the unquiet dead. Christians thought it was Satan. Or witches. Of course, everything those folk don't care for gets tared with the same brush.

Truth is, no one knows what, or who, brings Curse Creatures into the world. Which makes them hard to get rid of.



SHOW
ME THE FACE
OF MY *ENEMY*.

ting-
a-
ling

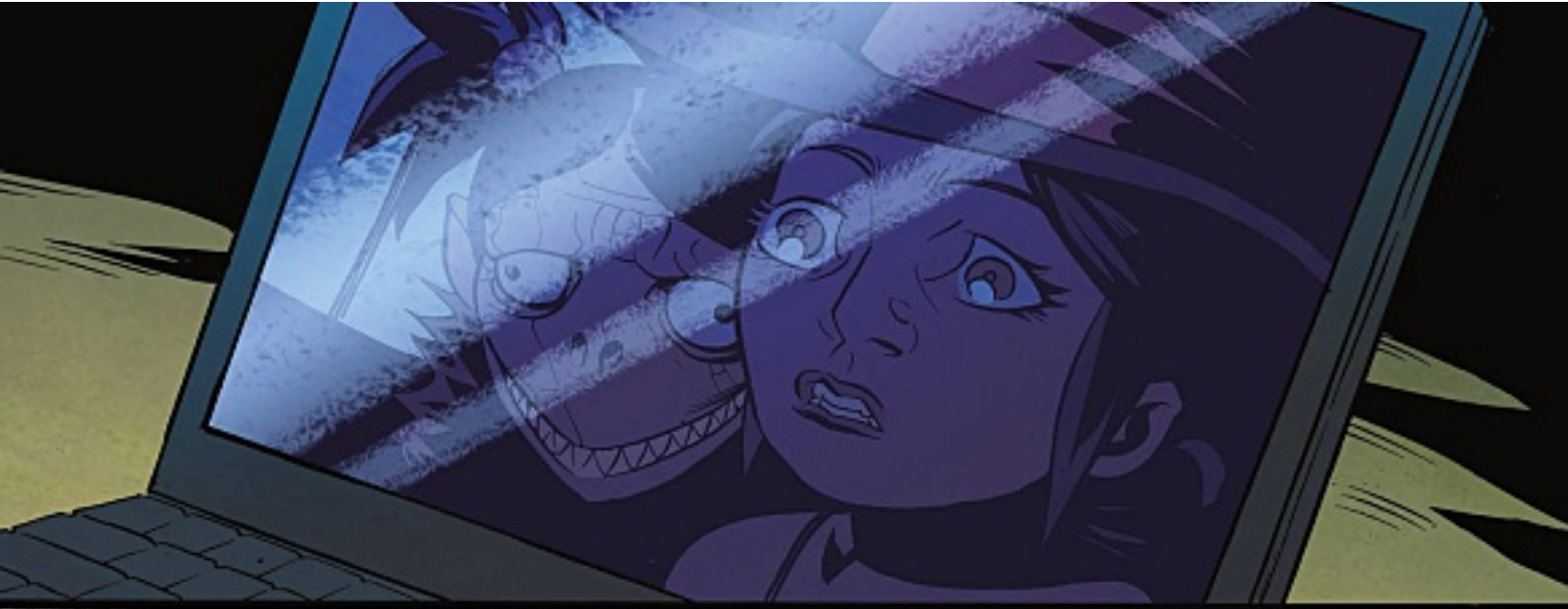
DAMMIT!
I TURNED
YOU OFF.

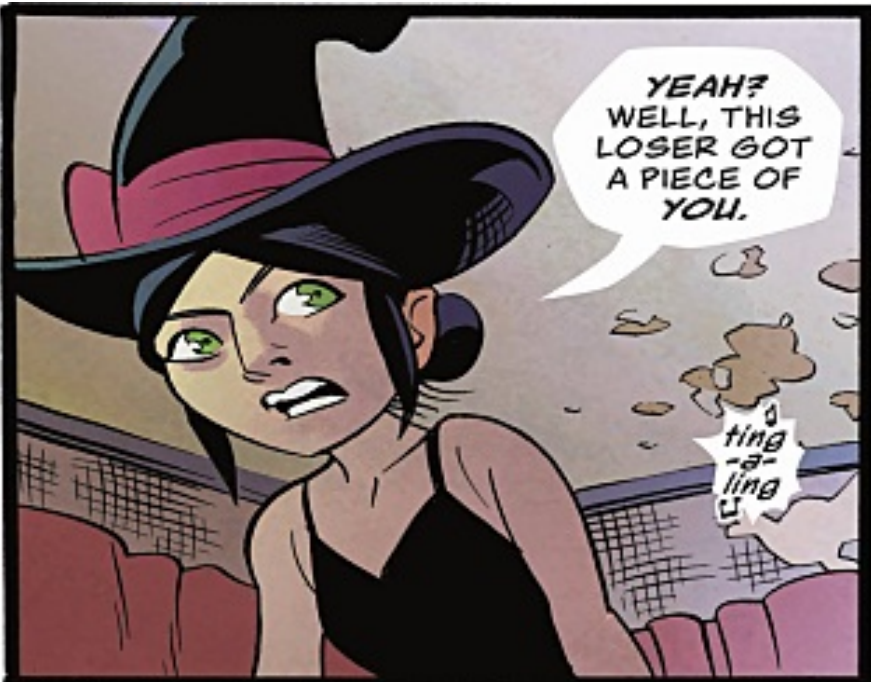
GRETCHEN,
DID YOU

KEEP IT
TOGETHER,
FAYE.

FIRST SIGN
OF MADNESS,
TALKING TO THE
CAT.

CLICK







IDIOT GIRL! YOU
WOULD LOCK ME IN HERE?
THIS IS MY HOME!
THIS IS MY HUNTING GROUND!





YOU'RE ALL
TRAPPED IN HERE
WITH ME!!!

I
BANISH
YOU!



THEY'RE NOT MY
FRIENDS. DO WHAT
YOU LIKE. I'M NOT
GONNA PLAY YOUR
GAME.

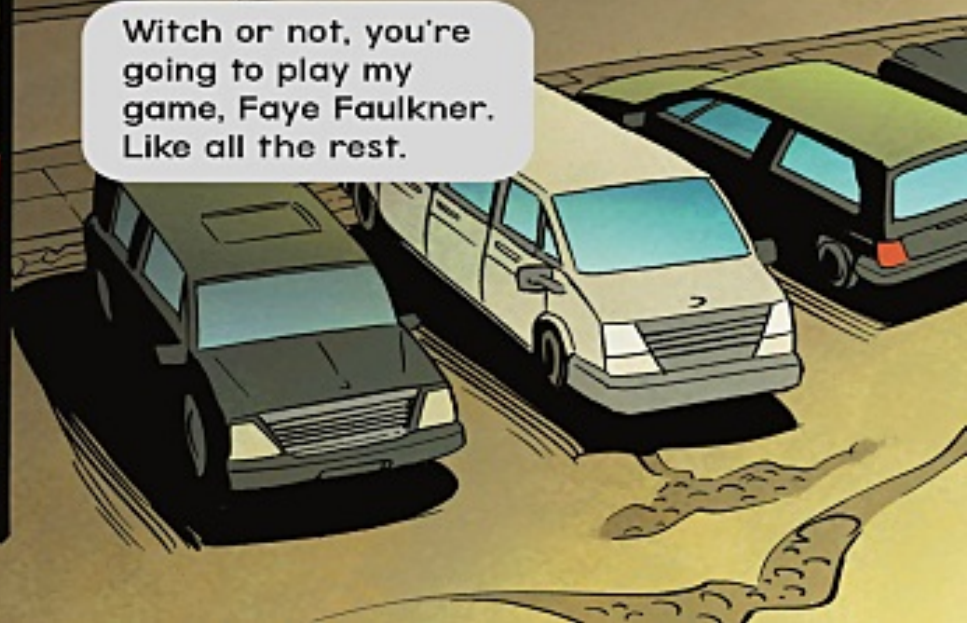


But your little
trinket can't
protect your
friends.

And what
about your
mom?

ting-a-ling

Witch or not, you're
going to play my
game, Faye Faulkner.
Like all the rest.





the shy_shelbi program

Step 4: Too Blessed to be Stressed

Successful people make losers uncomfortable. They will act like there's something wrong with you when you leave them behind in their misery. But you get to decide what matters and what's not worth losing sleep over. Step 4 is turning other people's jealousy to your benefit . . . more

WE SHARE YOUR FRUSTRATION. WE'RE CURRENTLY COOPERATING WITH A POLICE INVESTIGATION INTO THE IDENTITY OF THIS "SHY SHELBI" CYBER-BULLY.

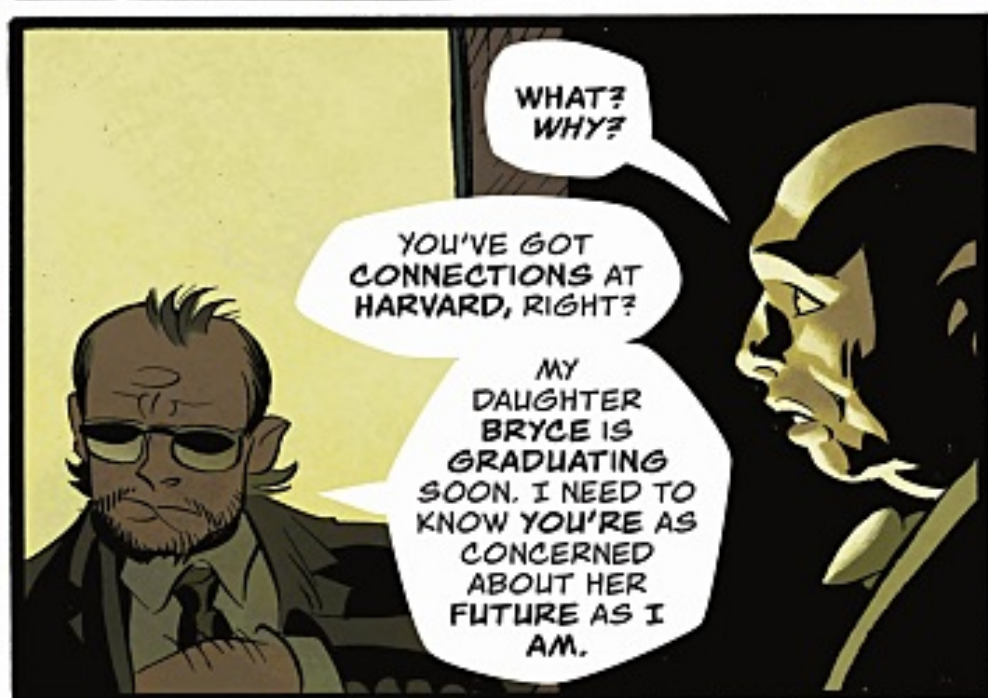
AND WE'VE BROUGHT IN A COUNSELOR TO WORK WITH SOME OF OUR MORE TROUBLED STUDENTS. BELIEVE ME, WE'RE DOING EVERYTHING WE-

A COUNSELOR?
I WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING TO CRACK DOWN ON THESE PRANKSTERS!

WHY SHOULD WE PLACE OUR TRUST IN THE ADMINISTRATION THAT LET THIS HAPPEN, WHEN WE COULD JUST SUE THE SCHOOL?

AND EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU?!

YEAH!!!



-Faye's Journal, October 10th -

Ever since Elvira died, solitude has been my safe space. No one could let me down if I didn't care. Or so I thought. But not anymore.

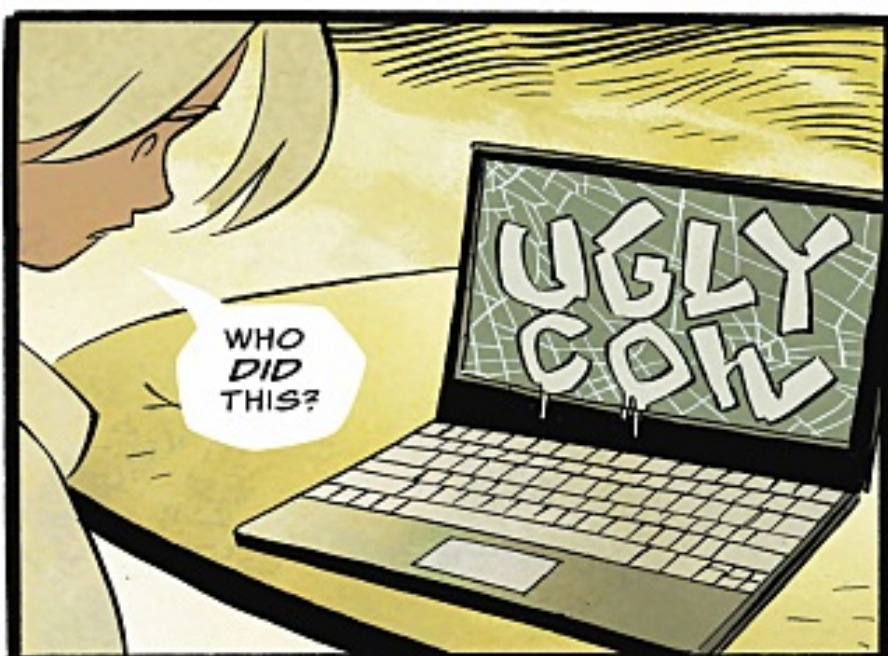
RAFF!
THIS WEEKEND?
POOL PARTY?

I'LL HAVE
TO ASK MY
PARENTS.

JUST
SAYIN'.

SEE MACKENZIE
OVER THERE?

SHE LOOKS
REAL GOOD IN HER
DESIGNER BIKINI.



YOU TELL ME!
IT WAS FINE WHEN
I PUT IT IN MY LOCKER
THIS MORNING.

YOU'RE
THE ONLY ONE
WHO KNOWS THE
COMBINATION,
TOINE!

HANG ON,
WHAT!?! YOU
THINK I DID
IT?

WELL? DID
YOU?

HOLD UP,
GIRL, I DIDN'T
EVEN—

DON'T YOU DARE
START CALLING ME
"GIRL" AGAIN.

I thought I
had nothing
left to lose.
I was wrong.

WOMAN

shy_shelbi
Let's start
simple
Go see sad,
homely little
Cody.

Tell her she deserves
what she got.



She did it for
nothing.

And she wasted
my time.



Tell her Shelbi
says ...



She's a lost cause.



A loser for life.



≥sigh≤

**COOKIES
AGAIN? I
DREAM OF THE
DAY YOU LEARN
TO COOK
DINNER.**



CAN YOU AT
LEAST **CLEAN THIS**
UP? IT'S ALREADY
7:00.

TASTE **THESE**.
I'M NOT SURE
WHAT I DID
WRONG.

WAY TO
UPSELL,
HON.

TASTES
FINE TO
ME.

THEY'RE
JUST NOT ...
MAGIC. NOT
LIKE **SHE**
MADE
THEM.

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND.
I FOLLOWED
THE **RECIPE** LIKE
ALWAYS.

HON,
SOONER OR
LATER YOU'RE
GONNA HAVE
TO ACCEPT IT'S
POSSIBLE TO DO
EVERYTHING
RIGHT AND
STILL **FAIL**.

IT'S THAT
FRIEND OF YOURS,
ISN'T IT? HAVE YOU
GONE TO **SEE**
HER IN THE
HOSPITAL?

SHE
WASN'T REALLY
A **FRIEND**.





AND ALL THE
GOOD SHE DID, EVEN
THOUGH NO ONE
ELSE CARED.

I
CARE.

ELVIRA
WAS LONELY
TOO, FAYE.



AND SHE WASN'T
TOO PROUD TO
BEFRIEND A CURIOUS
LITTLE KID WHO
THOUGHT WITCHES
WERE SCARY.



MAYBE YOU
SHOULD LEARN A
LESSON FROM
THAT.



ALL RIGHT,
DRAMA BOY.
LET'S DIAL IT BACK
A LITTLE. NOBODY
HATES YOU.

YOU HAVE NO IDEA.
YOU WOULDN'T
BELIEVE ME...

ACTUALLY...

... I'M
PRETTY
SURE I
WOULD.



YOU'RE NOT
THE ONLY
ONE.

I...
I COULDN'T
TELL
ANYBODY.

YOU DON'T
KNOW WHAT IT'S
LIKE TO FEEL
THAT ALONE.

Oh, C'MON!
REMEMBER
WHO YOU'RE
TALKING TO?

AND
YOU'RE NOT
ALONE,
OKAY?

FAYE?

HEY THERE.
HOW ARE YOU
HOLDING UP?

TRACTION.
AT LEAST
THERE'S INTERNET
TV HERE. I CAN
WATCH WHAT I
WANT FOR A
CHANGE.

YOU CAN
CATCH UP ON THAT
BAKING SHOW.
SPEAKING OF
WHICH ...

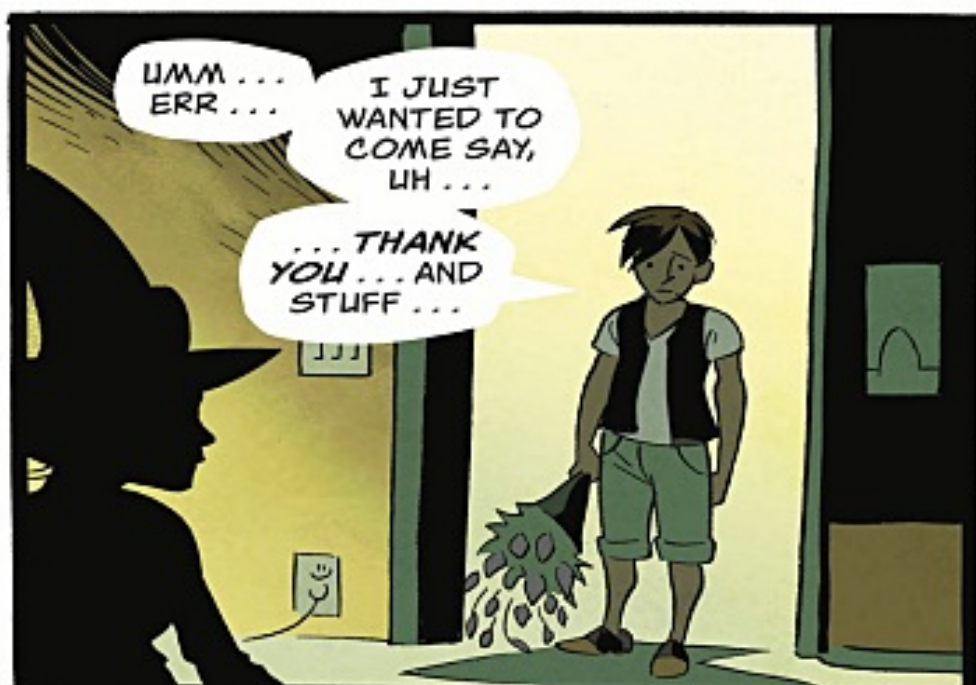
I, err,
BROUGHT
YOU SOME
COOKIES.

YOU MUST
THINK I'M AN
IDIOT.

TOLD YOU
SO. STICKING
YOUR NOSE IN
OTHER
PEOPLE'S
BUSINESS?
STUPID.

YOU KINDA
BROUGHT
THIS ...

uh ...



YEAH, SORRY. I BOUGHT THEM A COUPLE DAYS AGO, AND I, uh, COULDN'T ...

THEY'RE THE ONLY FLOWERS I'VE GOTTEN.

THANKS.

LET'S GET 'EM IN SOME FRESH WATER.

SO, uh, HOW'S ... LIFE ... ?

ARE YOU OKAY?

OW!
IT HURTS WHEN I LAUGH!

SORRY.




NO, I...
THANK YOU.
I NEEDED
THAT.

IT FEELS
LIKE YEARS SINCE
I'VE LAUGHED ABOUT
ANYTHING.



THERE,
THAT OUGHT
TO BRIGHTEN
UP THE
ROOM.

WHOA,
ARE THOSE MY
FLOWERS?



THEY
JUST NEEDED
A LITTLE TLC.

I GUESS
FAYE'S GOT
A MAGIC
TOUCH.



THANKS
FOR COMING,
JÚLIO. IT'S
NICE TO HAVE
COMPANY.



IN THIS
PLACE, I'M IN MY
ELEMENT.

IN THIS
CIRCLE, I AM IN
MY POWER.



REVEAL
THE HAND OF
SHY SHELBI.

SHOW ME HOW
FAR HER REACH
EXTENDS.



SHOW ME
EVERYONE SHE'S
TOUCHED.



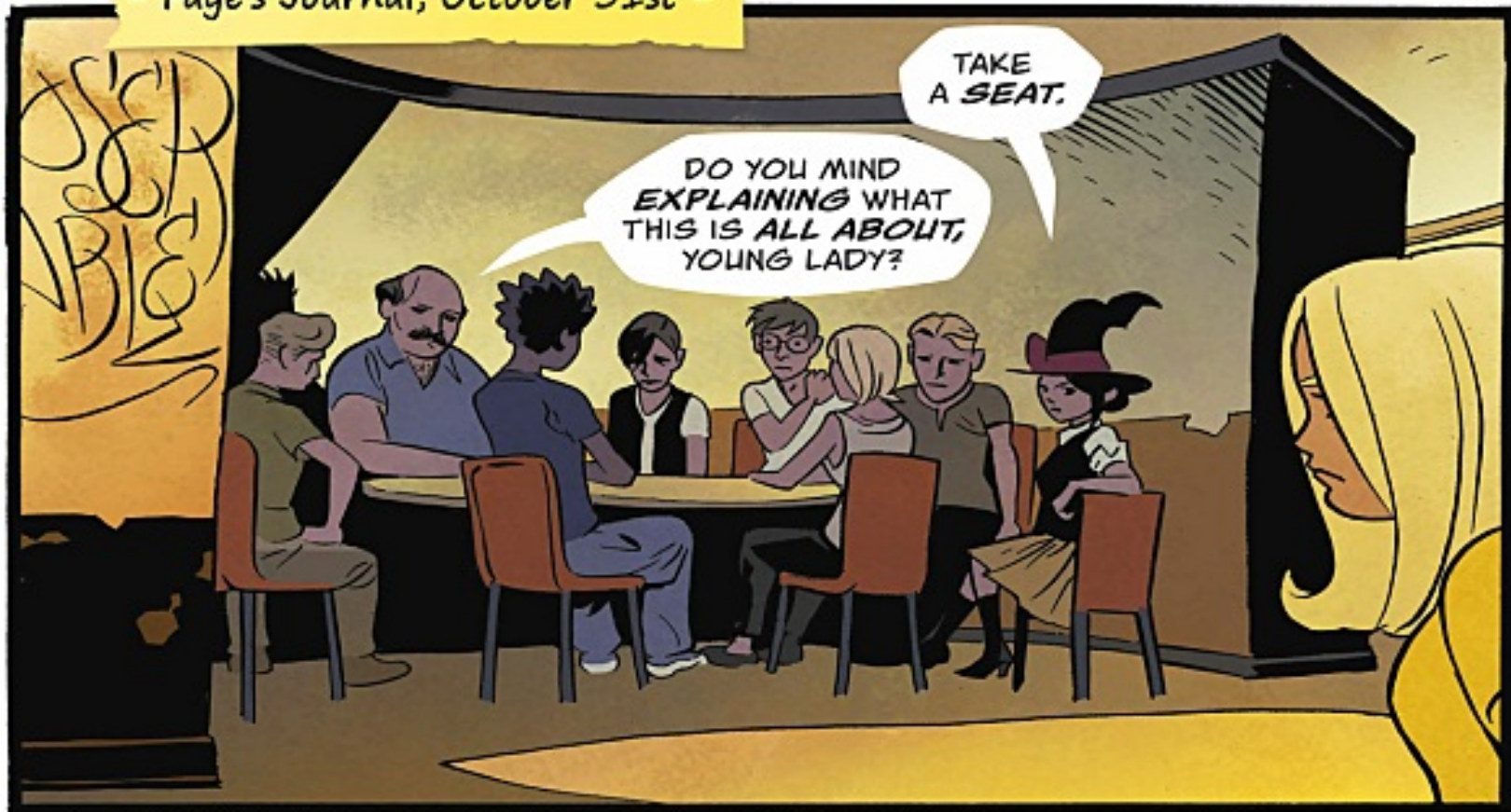
the shy_shelbi program


Step 5: Alphas Don't Run in Packs

The higher you climb, the more people will drag you down trying to ride your coattails. Cut them loose. It's lonely at the top, but the view is worth it. Step 5, there's only one first place. Make sure it's yours . . . more



- Faye's Journal, October 31st -



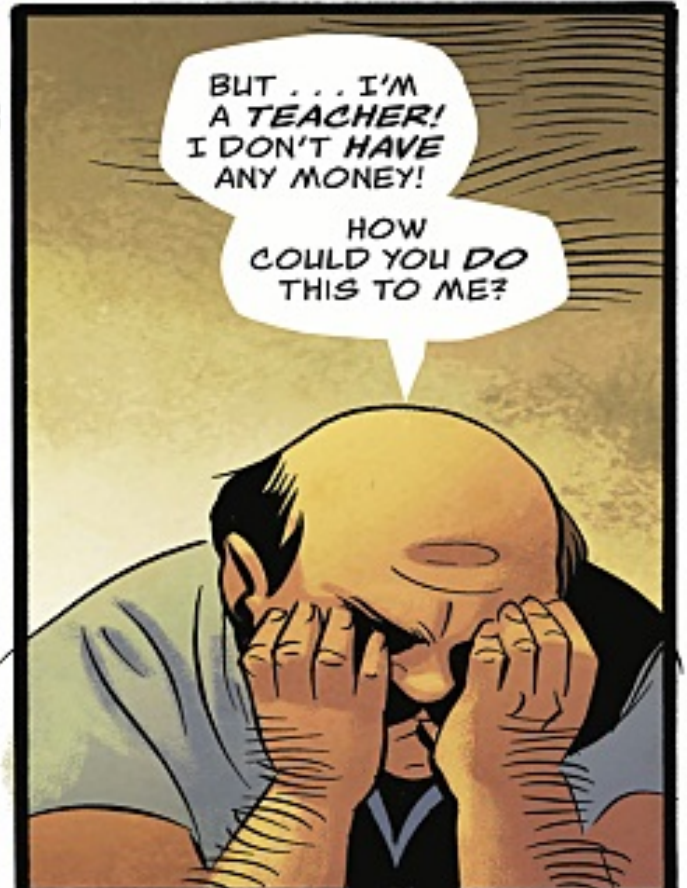


THIS IS ABOUT
SHY SHELBI. I
KNOW **EVERYTHING**.
ABOUT **ALL** OF
YOU.



HANG ON,
YOU'RE
SHELBI?

THIS WHOLE
THING IS JUST A
BLACKMAIL
SCHEME RUN BY
A **STUDENT**?

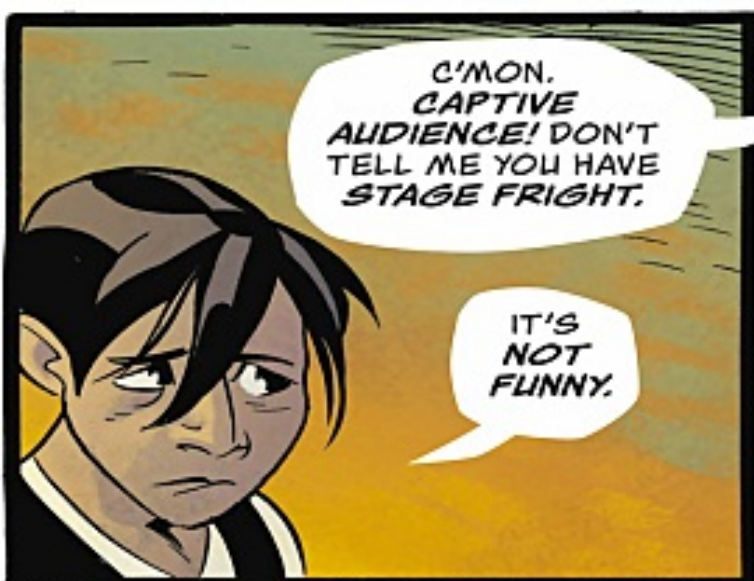


BUT . . . I'M
A **TEACHER**!
I DON'T HAVE
ANY MONEY!

HOW
COULD YOU DO
THIS TO ME?



I'M **NOT**
SHY SHELBI,
MR. KAUFMAN.









A CURSE
HANGS OVER THIS
PLACE. BUT IN THIS
CIRCLE, IT CAN'T
HURT US.



BECAUSE IN
THIS CIRCLE, WE ARE
IN OUR POWER.

WE SUMMON
YOU, CURSED
ONE, BY THE NAME
OF *SHY SHELBI*.



DON'T
BREAK THE
CIRCLE!

WHAT
THE HELL!?

WHAT
IS IT?!

HOLY
MOLY!





EXCUSE ME!?!

DON'T YOU SPEAK
TO MR. KAUFMAN LIKE
THAT! HE'S GOT A PHD!
WE LOOK UP TO HIM!




YEAH!
SCREW YOU,
DUDE! I'M GONNA
BE A STAR!

YEAH!
YOU'RE THE
UGLY ONE!

I'M A
NICE PERSON,
DAMMIT!



GO TO HELL!
I'M... I'M NOT
ASHAMED.



YOUR TRICKS
DON'T WORK HERE.
IN THIS CIRCLE,
WE'RE IN OUR
POWER.

SKRRREEEEEEEE

BY YOUR
OWN CURSE, I
BANISH YOU!

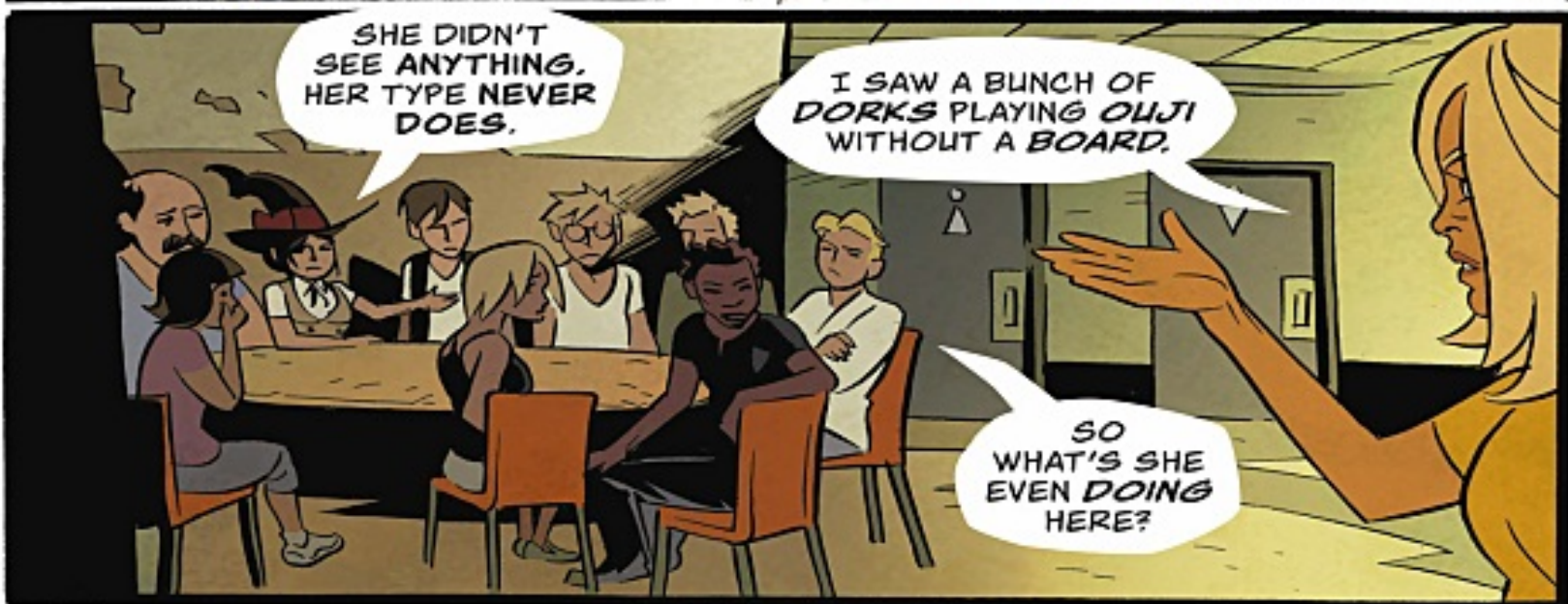




BACK WHERE
YOU *CAME* FROM.
JUST ANOTHER *EMPTY*
INSULT, ANOTHER SORRY
ATTEMPT TO TEAR
US DOWN.

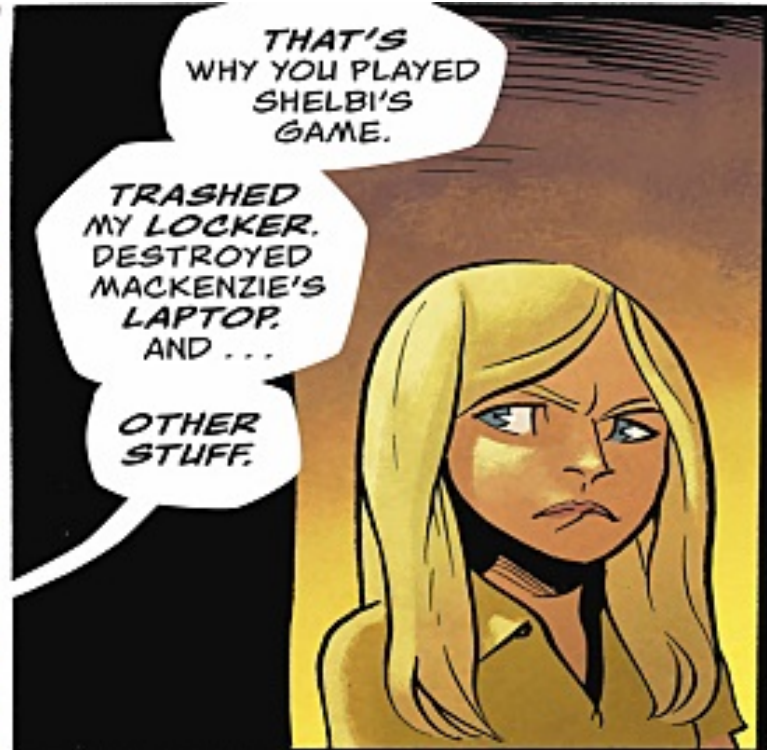


SOONER
OR LATER, WE
ALL LEARN TO
IGNORE YOU.





KEEPS YOU SAFE
FROM BEING HURT,
OR HEARTBROKEN,
OR ASHAMED.
BELIEVE ME,
I GET IT.



THAT'S
WHY YOU PLAYED
SHELBI'S
GAME.

TRASHED
MY LOCKER.
DESTROYED
MACKENZIE'S
LAPTOP.
AND ...

OTHER
STUFF.




SEE, I
KNOW ALL
YOUR DIRTY
SECRETS,
DEARIE. SO
YOU'RE
DONE.

NO MORE
PRANKS, OR I
EXPOSE YOU.



YOU
CAN'T PROVE
ANYTHING!



UP TO YOU.
BUT REMEMBER,
YOU'VE GOT A LOT
MORE TO LOSE
THAN ME.

WE FEW, WE HAPPY
FEW, WE BAND OF
BROTHERS...

FOR HE TO-DAY THAT SHEDS
HIS **BLOOD** WITH ME SHALL
BE MY **BROTHER**—

— Faye's Journal, November 1st —

OR
SISTER!

THAT'S JUST HOW
IT WAS **WRITTEN**,
STEF.

AND GENTLEMEN
IN ENGLAND NOW A-BED
SHALL THINK THEMSELVES
ACCURSED THEY WERE
NOT HERE...

AND HOLD
THEIR MANHOODS
CHEAP WHILST ANY
SPEAKS THAT
FOUGHT WITH
US...

WELL,
IF YOU GUYS
WANT TO STAGE THIS,
WE NEED TO DISCUSS
SOME THINGS.

HE'S
NOT BAD,
THOUGH. SMUG
LITTLE **TWERP**.

I'd gotten so used to it, so
used to having no one...

... I guess I never realized how cold I was.

Coming out of the cold can be just as scary and painful as going into it.

In a way it's worse. Knowing how it feels to lose everything...

hmph!

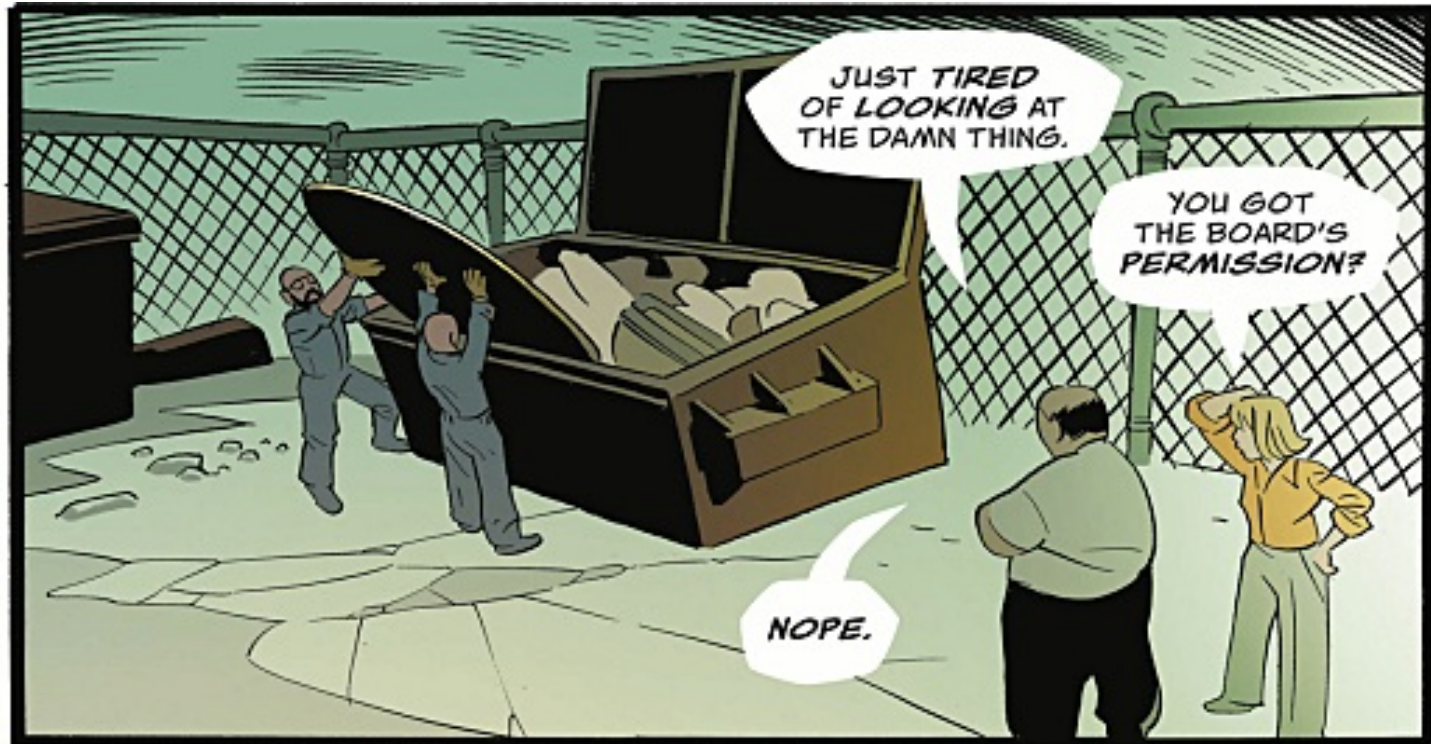
... it felt safer to have nothing.

SWEET RIDE.

RAFFI, RIGHT?

THANKS, YOU GUYS NEED A LIFT?

KAUFMAN? WHAT'S GOING ON?



JUST TIRED
OF LOOKING AT
THE DAMN THING.

YOU GOT
THE BOARD'S
PERMISSION?

NOPE.



But I think
maybe being
scared is
better than
being numb.

YA KNOW
SOMETHING,
GRETCHEN? I THINK
I CAN LIVE WITH
THIS.

THANKS FOR COMING IN,
MRS. FAULKNER. I'M AFRAID
A TROUBLING MATTER HAS BEEN
BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION.



WE'VE BEEN INFORMED THAT YOUR *DAUGHTER* MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS "*SHY SHELBI*" CYBER-BULLYING INCIDENT.

ARE YOU KIDDING ME? I'M THE ONE WHO—

THIS IS THE FIRST I'VE HEARD OF ANY OF THIS!



PERHAPS IF YOU WERE MORE INVOLVED WITH FAYE'S LIFE—

HANG ON! DO YOU HAVE ANY EVIDENCE?



ANOTHER STUDENT CAME FORWARD.

SO IT'S THEIR WORD AGAINST FAYE'S?!



IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE. WE TAKE BULLYING VERY SERIOUSLY, MRS. FAULKNER.





IT WAS YOU,
HUH? THIS IS MY
SHOCKED FACE.

MY DAD
HAS A LOTTA
PULL ON THE
SCHOOL
BOARD.

SO I
GUESS I'LL
SEE YOU
AROUND.
OR MAYBE
NOT.

IT'S FOR THE
BEST, I SUPPOSE. A
SCAPEGOAT MEANS
SHY SHELBI LOSES ANY
LINGERING MYSTIQUE.
ONE MORE NAIL IN HER
COFFIN.

BUT HERE'S
THE THING ABOUT
CALLING SOMEONE'S
BLUFF, BRYCE.

SALAN'S
LITTLE
HELPER
SLAM

YOU BETTER
BE DAMN SURE
THEY'RE
BLUFFING.

THAT'S GREAT NEWS.
I'M GLAD WE COULD COME
TO A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL
ARRANGEMENT.

I THINK
YOU'LL FIND I'M
A GOOD FRIEND
TO HAVE, MR.
ATLEY.

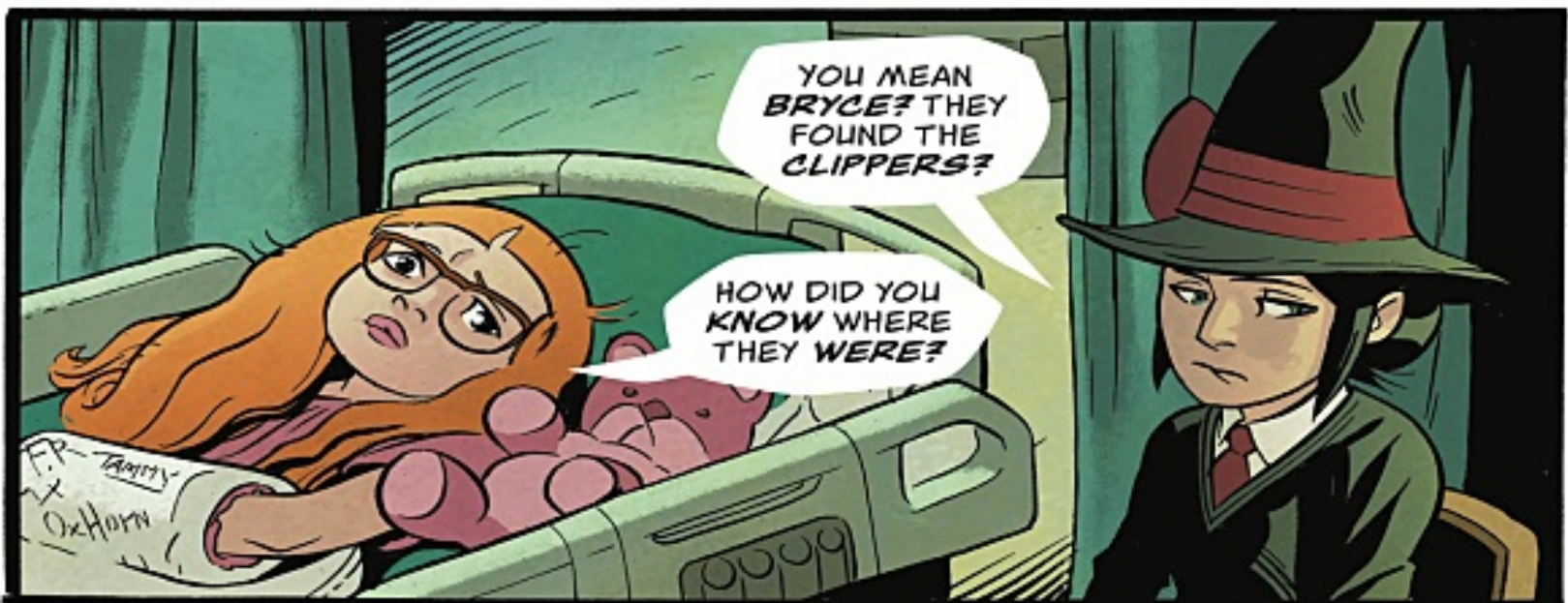
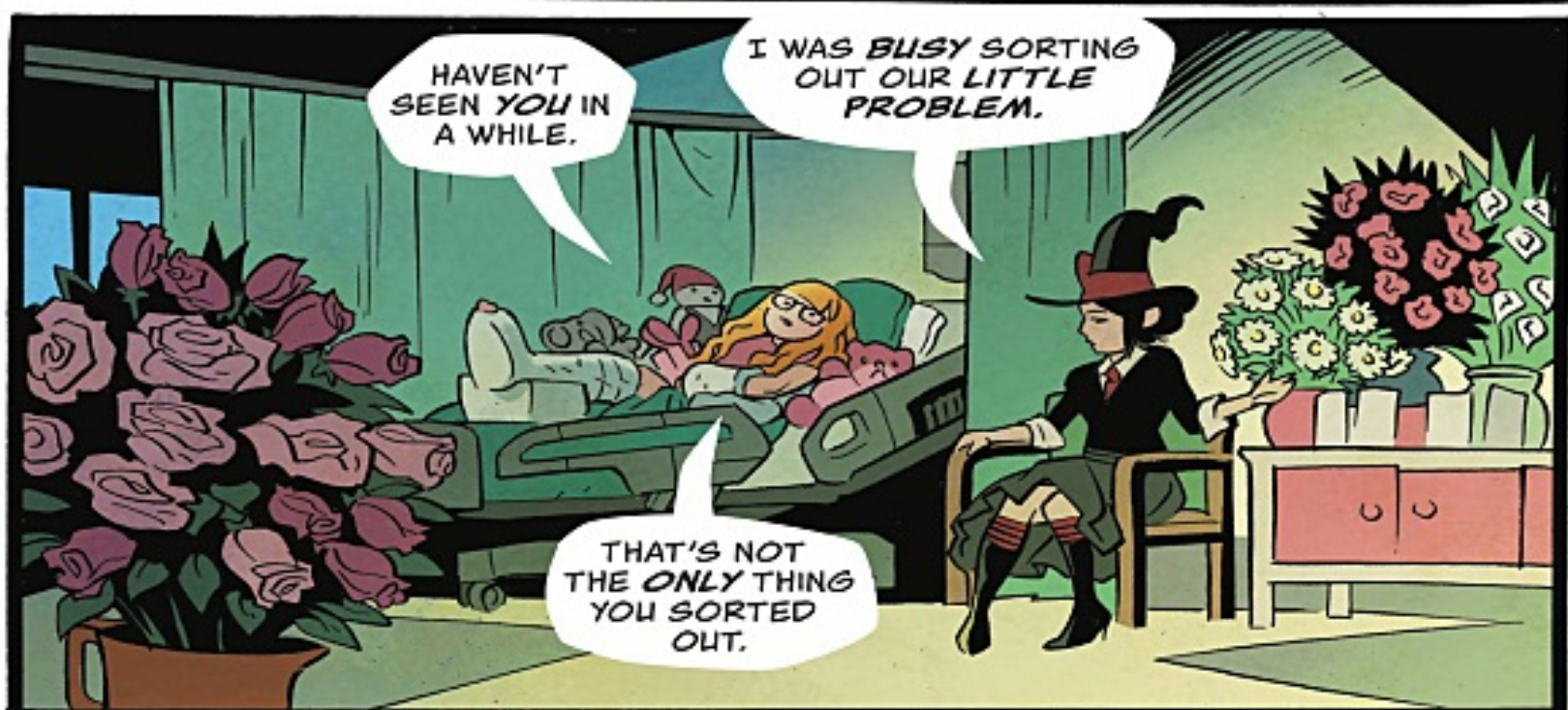
CONGRATULATIONS,
BUTTERCUP. YOU'RE GOING
TO HARVARD.

YOU'RE THE
BEST DAD IN
THE WORLD!

DON'T
GET UP, MOM.
I'LL GET IT.

KNOCK
KNOCK

MISS
SPOONER? I
NEED TO SPEAK
TO YOUR
PARENTS.





WITCHCRAFT, OF COURSE. BUT I NEEDN'T HAVE BOTHERED.

ONLY **BRYCE** IS ARROGANT ENOUGH TO PUT THEM BACK IN THE **TOOL DRAWER** ALL COVERED IN **FINGERPRINTS** AND **BRAKE FLUID**.




I WISH YOU'D JUST LEFT IT ALONE. NOW WE ALL HAVE TO LIVE WITH **KNOWING...**



KNOWING **SHE'S** THE ONE WHO PUT YOUR MOM IN THE HOSPITAL?

WOULD YOU RATHER SHE **GET AWAY** WITH IT? MAYBE DO SOMETHING EVEN **WORSE** NEXT TIME?



SHE SAYS SHE **DIDN'T MEAN** IT TO BE THAT BAD. SHE THOUGHT IT WOULD JUST BE A **FENDER BENDER**.

AND THAT MAKES IT **OKAY?**

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!

THE POLICE
TOOK HER AWAY
IN HANDCUFFS.

I'LL SUE THE
DEPARTMENT!

I NEED YOU
TO CALM DOWN,
MR. SPOONER.

MOM! TELL
THEM I DIDN'T
MEAN IT!

TELL THEM
IT'S OKAY!

I...
uh...

IT'S
NOT.

DON'T
WORRY,
BUTTERCUP.

DAD TOOK HER
SIDE, OF COURSE.

DADDY
WILL TAKE CARE
OF THIS.

MOM WON'T TALK TO BRYCE.
OR DAD. I THINK THEY'RE
GONNA GET A DIVORCE.

I CAN'T
TALK HER OUT
OF IT.

HEY! IT'S
NOT MY FAULT
YOUR SISTER'S
A SOCIOPATH!

YOU KEEP LOOKING FOR
A WAY TO MAKE **EVERYBODY**
HAPPY! BUT **SOME** PEOPLE ARE
ONLY HAPPY WHEN THEY'RE
MAKING EVERYONE ELSE
MISERABLE!

YOU COULD
AT LEAST HAVE
CHECKED WITH ME
BEFORE YOU **BLEW**
MY FAMILY APART!

YA
KNOW
WHAT!?

≥sigh≤

NEVER MIND.

THIS IS WHY I NEVER
LEFT THE **LOSER** TABLE,
AND NEVER KEPT UP WITH
ANYONE WHO DID.

THIS IS WHY I DON'T
STICK MY **NOSE** IN OTHER
PEOPLE'S **BUSINESS**. WITCHES
AREN'T **GOOD** AT ...

≥sigh≤

I'M ...

... NOT
GOOD AT BEING
FRIENDS.

I SAY THINGS
PEOPLE DON'T
LIKE TO HEAR. I DIG
THINGS UP PEOPLE
WANT TO KEEP
BURIED. I TRY
NOT TO,
BUT ...



SOONER OR
LATER, EVERYONE
ENDS UP HATING
ME.



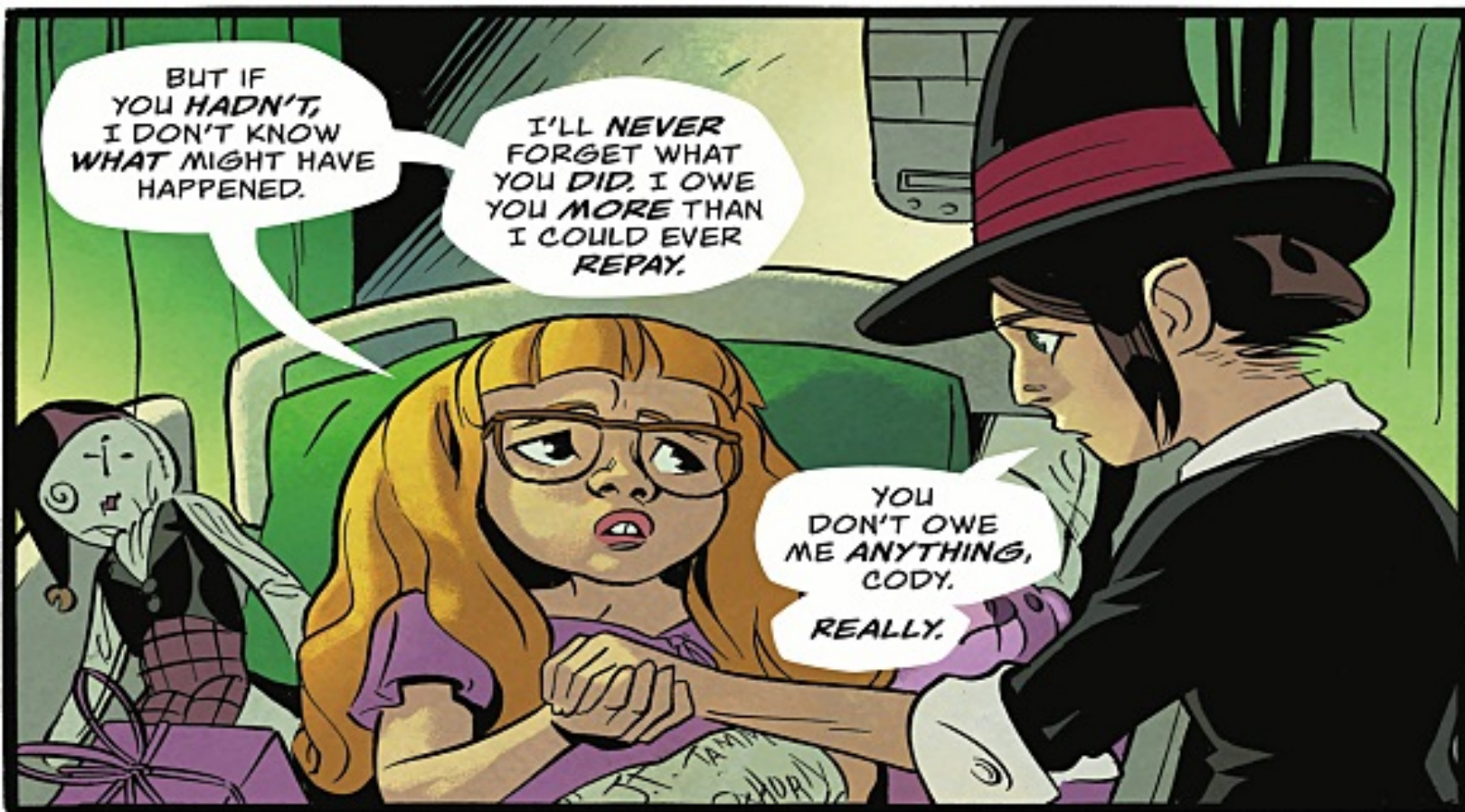
I DIDN'T
MEAN TO MESS
THINGS UP FOR YOU,
CODY. I WAS JUST
TRYING TO HELP.



SORRY.



FAYE,
WAIT!







WHAT,
YOU'RE NEVER
GONNA HELP
ANYONE EVER
AGAIN?

YOU'RE
LIKE MY MOM.
YOU CAN'T HELP
BUT CARE ABOUT
PEOPLE.



JUST TAKE
A PAGE FROM
MY DAD'S BOOK.
DON'T SELL
YOURSELF
SHORT.

YOU'RE A BIG DEAL,
FAYE FAULKNER. KNOW
YOUR WORTH.





Thanks to Charlotte, Kay, and everyone at Abrams
for believing in this project.

Thanks to Scott Zoback for having my back and
Alan Spiegel for being a warm, friendly presence
at Comic Cons since forever. You guys are the best.

Thanks to Paget, Azmeer, Anne-Claude, and everyone
else who let me talk their ear off about this project.
Sometimes you just need to hear the ideas out loud
and good feedback is priceless.

Thanks to Jessica and Brian Berlin, Melanie,
Barbara, Jen, Lesley, and all my beloved community
for moral, emotional, and spiritual support.

Thanks Mom and Dad for always believing in my work.

As ever, thanks to Kelly Crumrin.









DOUBLE, DOUBLE, TOIL AND TROUBLE,

the pranks won't stop
'til this school's rubble!

"Ted Naifeh has built a world that's magically creepy, manically creative, and downright fun. This is an essential addition to the high school witch canon, deserving a place in your heart next to *The Craft* and *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*. I'm looking forward to seeing tons of angsty Faye Faulkner Halloween costumes in the future."

—Grace Ellis, cocreator of *Lumberjanes*

"*Witch for Hire* is beautifully scripted and drawn, and tells a tale about the people we don't know we can't live without. It will make you want to hug your best, weirdest friends. Highest recommendation."

—Gail Simone,
author of DC's
Birds of Prey



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